INSIDE Our Top 10 ▸ *Movies / Shows / Albums / Books* **& MORE!**

Entertainment WEEKLY

DEC. 12, 2014 • #1341

BEST AND WORST 2014

★ **HOSTED** *by*

JIMMY FALLON

Our 2014 **ENTERTAINER** *of the* **YEAR**

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Surface Pro 3

Headline is a direct comparison to the 13" MacBook Air. Adobe Photoshop, Office and keyboard sold separately.

File Edit Image Layer Type Select Filter 3D View Window Help
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Navigator
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Layers Channels Paths
Normal
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KING OF COMEDY
We crown *Tonight Show* host Jimmy Fallon our Entertainer of the Year

PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER

Features

8 The Year That Was Whether it was getting away with murder, finding fault in our stars, or just dumping ice on our heads, this year always kept us entertained. And before it goes, here's 53 pages of highs and lows—from our critics' top 10 lists to celebrity missives—proving that 2014 was undoubtedly the Groot-iest year yet.

30 Entertainer of the Year: Jimmy Fallon How do you turn a 20th-century institution like *The Tonight Show* into a 21st-century viral hit? Give it to Fallon. After taking over Jay Leno's desk in February, the comic-turned-host-turned-merry-prankster has boosted viewership on air and online with laughs, celebrity high jinks, and musical mayhem—and there's more to come in 2015.

BY RAY RAHMAN

ON THE COVER
Jimmy Fallon photographed exclusively for EW by Art Streiber on Nov. 20, 2014, in New York City

STYLING: BRIAN COATS/THE WALL GROUP; WARDROBE DRESSER: STEPHANIE BIEAR; HAIR: MARIE ARGENZIANO; GROOMING: CYNDIE LOU BOEHM/TRACEY MATTINGLY; PROP STYLING: SHAWN PATRICK ANDERSON/BRIDGE ARTISTS; SUIT: BURBERRY

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ALL EPISODES
DECEMBER 12

2014'S *CRIMINALLY UNDERRATED*

Must List

THE MOST MAGICAL MOMENTS YOU MAY HAVE MISSED THIS YEAR

1

EDGE OF TOMORROW

It had the most ill-advised name since *Cougar Town*, but this time-loop actioner turned out to be a perfect sci-fi *Groundhog Day*, especially thanks to Emily Blunt's hard-edged performance. Rechristened *Live Die Repeat* for its 3-D Blu-ray release, the movie boasts 90 minutes of bonus material in a new three-disc set. *(PG-13)*

Emily Blunt and Tom Cruise

2 / **YOU'RE THE WORST** FX has mercifully renewed the raunchy sitcom, a summer sleeper about two horrible people falling horribly in love that refreshingly avoids most of the rom-com tropes that plagued so many of its lesser genre-mates this fall.

3 / **RED RISING, by Pierce Brown** Violent, innovative, action-packed, immersive—this dystopian stunner deserved the comparisons to *The Hunger Games* but strangely never became a massive hit. If you start it now, you won't have to wait long for the sequel, *Golden Son* (out Jan. 6).

"Ender, Katniss, and now Darrow."
—Scott Sigler
RED RISING
PIERCE BROWN

4 / **BORGMAN** The Dutch oddity—and Cannes Film Festival favorite—isn't necessarily to everyone's taste, but select audiences will appreciate the fever pitch of weirdness it reaches with a story of a vagrant who moves in and tears a bourgeois family apart. *(NR)*

EDGE OF TOMORROW: DAVID JAMES (2); *YOU'RE THE WORST*: BYRON COHEN/FX; *BORGMAN*: COURTESY OF DRAFTHOUSE FILMS

ILLUSTRATION BY **JESSE LENZ**

5 / *“GOOD KISSER,” Usher*

A deliriously giddy bit of filthy funk from one of our most consistently fascinating R&B masterminds. Despite its sticky-huge hook and positive approach to the body’s southern hemisphere, it sputtered on the charts. Consider it a late-blooming winter warmer.

6 / **THE AFFAIR** The slow-burn he-said/she-said drama is as riveting as it is romantic, bolstered by some of the strongest ensemble work this year. Now we just have to decide if we pick Ruth Wilson or Maura Tierney. *(Showtime, Sundays, 10 p.m.)*

7 / **EVERGREEN, Broods** With their uncluttered songwriting and haunting knack for synth-propped melody, the New Zealand siblings’ swelling electro is just a CW-drama montage away from world domination.

8 / **YOU CAN’T TAKE IT WITH YOU**
There’s much more to this tip-top Broadway revival than big laughs (seized primarily by Annaleigh Ashford’s inspired goofing): It’s the show’s giant heart, provided by an ace cast including James Earl Jones, Rose Byrne, and Elizabeth Ashley.

Letters of Note

9 / **LETTERS OF NOTE, by Shaun Usher** Handsome as a coffee-table book but substantive enough to be pored over, this is an endlessly surprising collection of real correspondences between figures such as Gandhi and Hitler, Elvis and Nixon, and Jack the Ripper and the authorities.

10 / **THE COMEBACK** It took us a while to get back in sync with faded B-lister Valerie Cherish (winningly played by series co-creator Lisa Kudrow), but now we’re totally on board. Nine years off the air added the perfect punch to the biting Hollywood satire. *(HBO, Sundays, 10 p.m.)*

THE AFFAIR: STEVEN LIPPMAN/SHOWTIME; USHER: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE; BROODS: KYLE DEAN; *YOU CAN’T TAKE IT WITH YOU*: JOAN MARCUS; *THE COMEBACK*: COLLEEN HAYES/HBO

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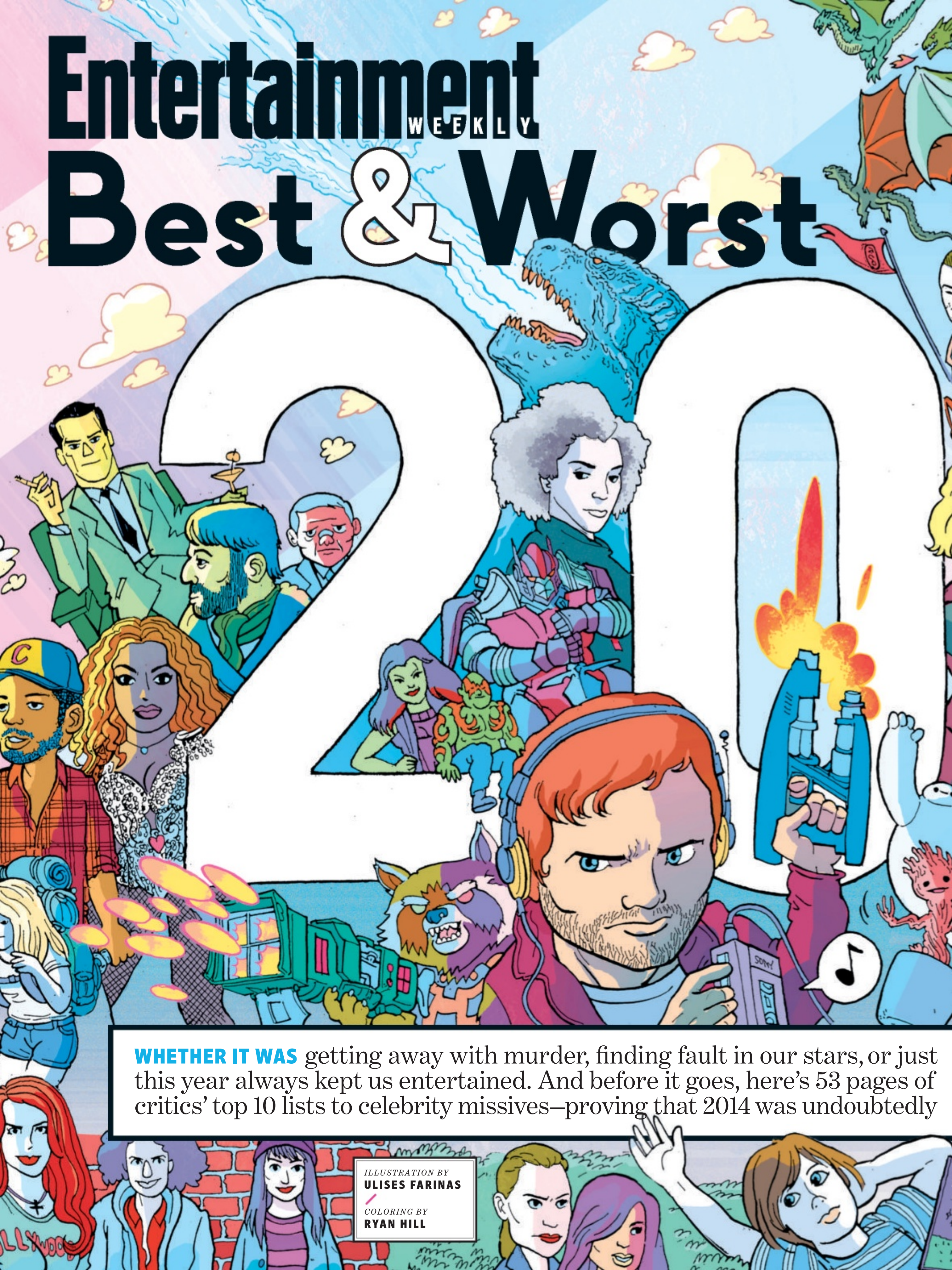
Entertainment WEEKLY

Best & Worst



WHETHER IT WAS getting away with murder, finding fault in our stars, or just
this year always kept us entertained. And before it goes, here's 53 pages of
critics' top 10 lists to celebrity missives—proving that 2014 was undoubtedly

ILLUSTRATION BY
ULISES FARINAS
COLORING BY
RYAN HILL

14
MISSING
1989
I KNOW H.T.M.L
STATION ELEVEN
WALTER KIRN BLOOD WILL OUT
CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING MORE PLEASANT?
NOT THAT KIND OF GIRL

dumping ice on our heads,
highs and lows—from our
the Groot-iest year yet.

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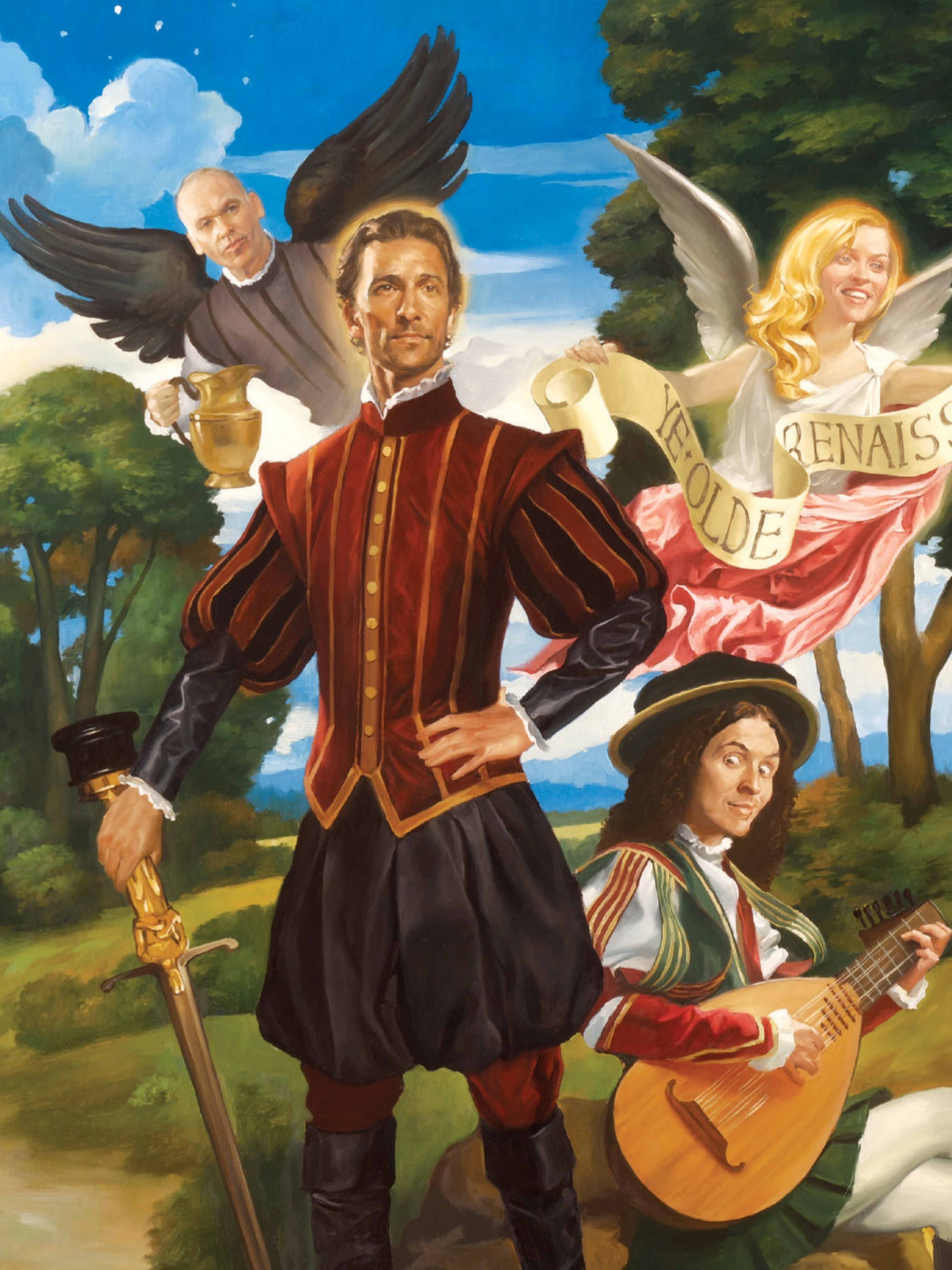
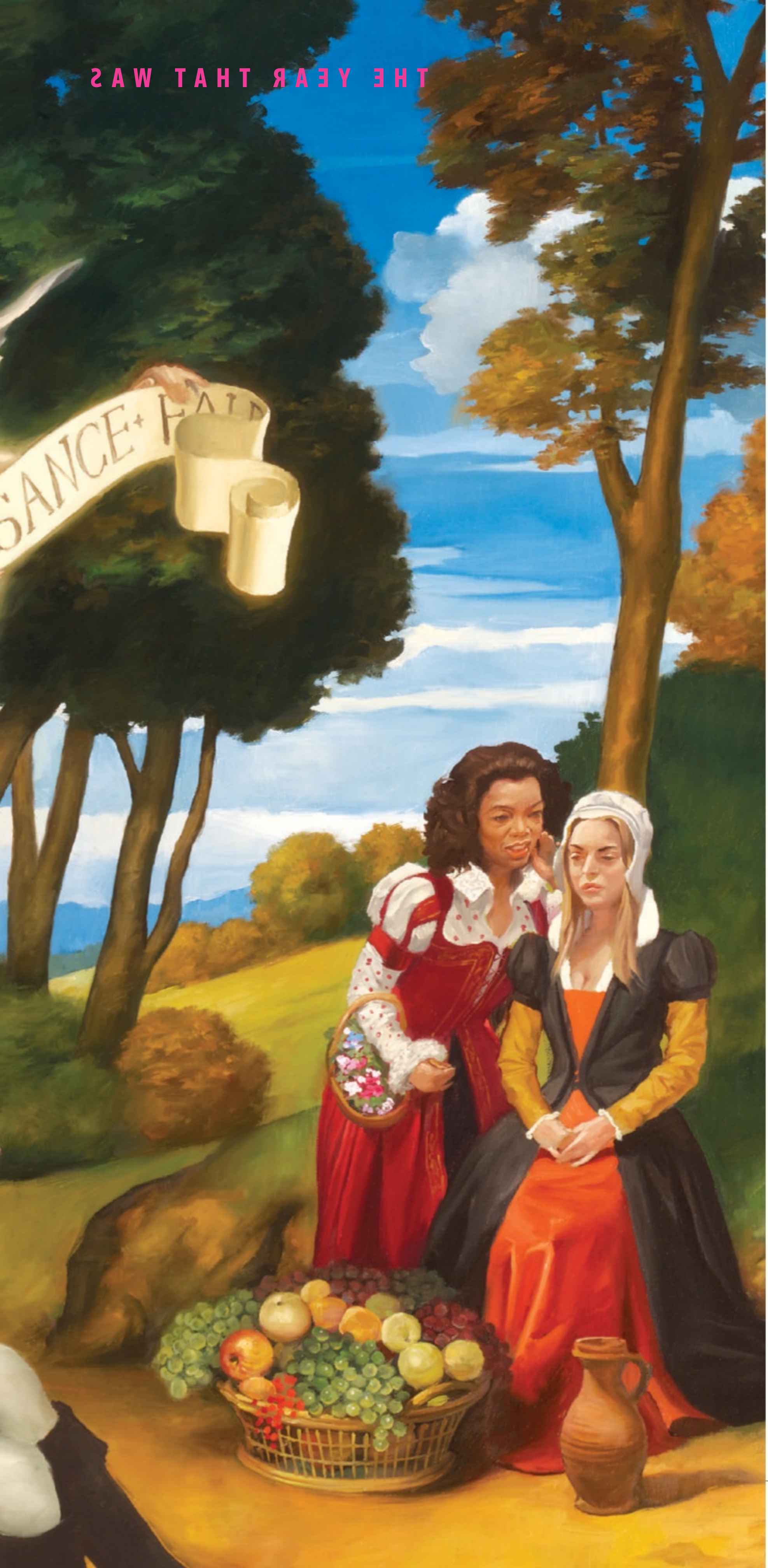

YE·OLDE RENAISS



THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

EVERYONE HAD A RENAISSANCE

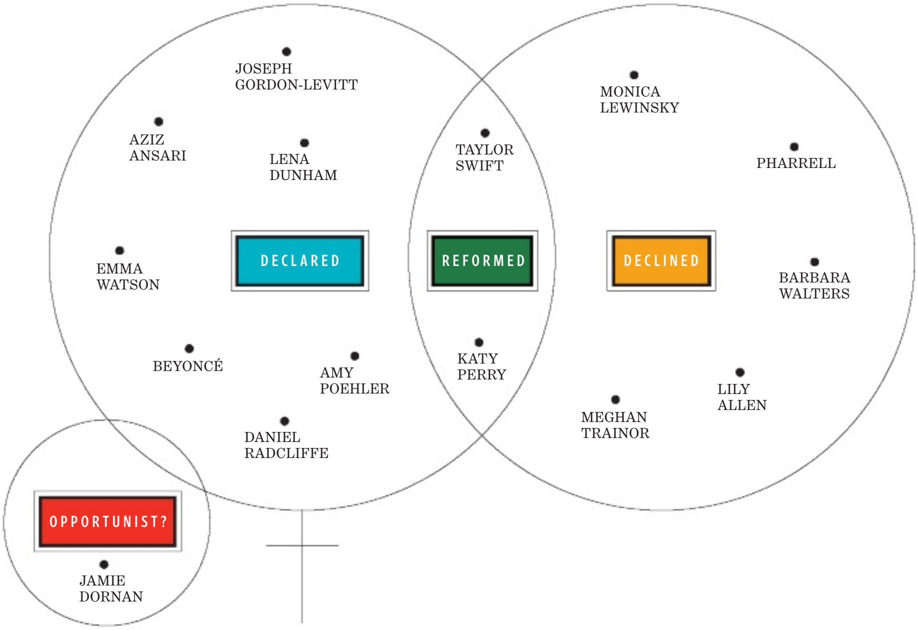
If time really is a flat circle, then maybe **Matthew McConaughey** always knew he was destined for a McConaissance—even when he was romancing *The Wedding Planner* and searching for *Fool's Gold*. The 45-year-old kicked off 2014 by winning his first Academy Award for *Dallas Buyers Club*, which he followed with an Emmy nomination for HBO's *True Detective*. In November, he blasted off in *Interstellar*, but not before proving he's still totally grounded in a Lincoln car commercial. It's been an—all together now—*alright, alright, alright* year for the actor.

Could it be that McConaughey is passing around his goblet of prosperity, seeing as renaissances seem to be catching on in Hollywood? After all, **Reese Witherspoon** is enjoying the beginnings of her own, er, Reese-aissance, earning awards whispers as she trades in her kitten heels for hiking boots in *Wild*. If you chant "Oscar buzz" three times, you'll conjure former Batman **Michael Keaton**, who got meta in October's *Birdman*, playing a fallen big-screen superhero looking for a comeback. And **"Weird Al" Yankovic**'s 14th(!) studio album, *Mandatory Fun*, hit No. 1 in July, a first in his 30-year career. (Though maybe that's less a renaissance than an Al-wakening.)

But not every renaissance made it out of the dark ages. **Lindsay Lohan**'s OWN docuseries could've launched a renaissance; instead, the show climaxed with **Oprah Winfrey** telling the troubled 28-year-old to "cut the bulls---." There's still hope, though. Lohan has since retreated to London to headline a production of *Speed-the-Plow*. Who knows, maybe we'll soon be talking about the LiLo-lightenment of 2015.
—AMY WILKINSON

←
ILLUSTRATION BY
ROBERTO PARADA

▶ *THE YEAR* IN *WORDS* • **Utopia** [yu-tō-pē-ə] *n.* The place where nothing exciting happens on TV



THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

Everyone Used the F-Word

"ARE YOU A FEMINIST?" That was the litmus test lobbed at everyone from Shailene Woodley to Kelis, of "Milkshake" fame, in 2014. (For the record, the answer from both was no.) Men didn't get a pass. Daniel Radcliffe, Pharrell, and *Fifty Shades of Grey* star Jamie Dornan were all grilled on their Gloria Steinem bona fides this year. Harry Potter declared himself a feminist. The dude in the Arby's hat said he didn't think men *could* be feminists. As for Christian Grey? He bit his lip and flip-flopped. The question was so ubiquitous that TIME magazine included *feminist* on its annual list of words that deserve to be banned: "When did it become a thing that every celebrity had to state their position on whether this word applies to them?" the mag asked on Nov. 12. (Editors later apologized for the term's inclusion.)

But while some waited to be asked, other stars flaunted their credentials. Benedict Cumberbatch and Tom Hiddleston blew up Twitter by posing in "This Is What a Feminist Looks Like" T-shirts. Emma Watson gave a stirring speech about gender equality at the United Nations. Beyoncé reiterated her status as the music industry's most high-profile women's advocate by posing on stage at the VMAs before a giant backdrop flashing "FEMINIST." And though a few celebs' definitions might not pass muster with Webster's—Katy Perry thinks feminism means "lov[ing] myself as a female and I also love men"—others are helping to make the term's meaning clearer than ever. "Do you believe that women should have equal rights to men? And that we should fight for those rights?" media critic Anita Sarkeesian asked Stephen Colbert on his show. When the host answered in the affirmative, she said, "Great. Then you're a feminist." —HILLARY BUSIS

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ An app brought us dangerously close to understanding (and loving) life as a Kardashian.

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

NOBODY WON IN GAMERGATE

Supporters say Gamergate is about ethics in videogame journalism. Everyone else says it's about gender warfare and how the Internet spreads a bad idea like a virus. It started with a blog post: a man accusing a female videogame designer of cheating on him with, among other people, a videogame journalist. The woman was harassed and threatened online. Then another woman got the same treatment, and another. As of Dec. 1, the #gamergate hashtag had been tweeted nearly 4 million times. Now Gamergate partisans are pleading for mercy. They're misunderstood! Misrepresented by a lunatic fringe! Gamergate was the dark side of the Internet age, the moment social media got weaponized. Look closely and you can see all the promise of our hyperconnected society devolving into a shrill cacophony of endless infighting. What a waste of an era. —DARREN FRANICH

Let's elevate the moment.
3:10
Apps
Bing
iHeartRadio
MovieTickets.com
OpenTable
Pandora
Facebook Places
Yelp
Reorder
68
AUTO
A/C
Toyota Corolla
toyota.com/corolla
TOYOTA
Let's Go Places

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↑ (Clockwise from top left) *How I Met Your Mother, Hedwig and the Angry Inch, Gone Girl*, and *A Million Ways to Die in the West*

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I Started a New Chapter, Then Wrote a Whole Book

BY *NEIL PATRICK HARRIS*

THIS LAST YEAR has been the most glorious of clusterf---s. I was finishing *How I Met Your Mother*, in rehearsals to perform *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* on Broadway, and filming back-to-back feature films. I remember one day where, after *HIMYM*, I drove across town to put on high-heeled boots to rehearse in a totally new physicality for *Hedwig*, then headed back across town to do some looping for the Western *A Million Ways to Die in the West*, and then went to a table read for the *Gone Girl*. It was a bit like juggling. Juggling a bowling ball, a tennis racket, a kitten, and a chain saw.

So I added a book. But I needed a structure that allowed for a healthy dose of self-deprecation—the last thing I wanted was for my book, *Choose Your Own Autobiography*, to seem a self-important memoir. My life is very full, but incredibly random. This year I got to both shag probable Academy Award nominee Rosamund Pike in a David Fincher film *and* s--- in a derby in a Seth MacFarlane comedy.

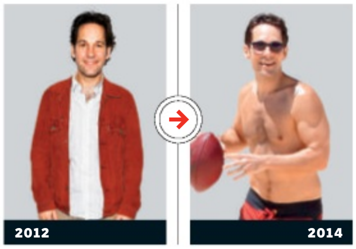
Right now, I'm in New Orleans filming *American Horror Story: Freak Show*. My husband David's doing a cabaret that I'm directing in New York. We bought a brownstone in Harlem that we're renovating. I'm starting a production company. And I'm gearing up to host the Oscars. But I remain hopeful that next year will involve more calm, more family time. Sigh. 'Cuz nothing says calm quite like tireless, ebullient twin four-year-olds...

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ Willow Smith learned to control time.

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

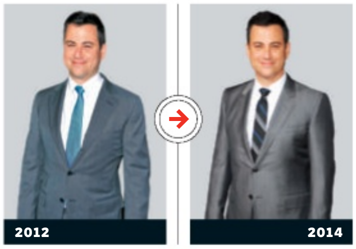
FUNNY GUYS GOT FIT

Hollywood's latest exercise trend is comedy cardio. That would help explain why several of our favorite stars (hey there, Chris Pratt) are now looking considerably more svelte. Laughing can hurt your stomach, but we didn't know it could give you abs. Like, *good* abs.



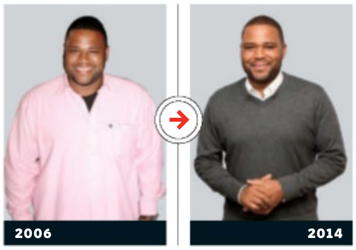
2012 → 2014

PAUL RUDD



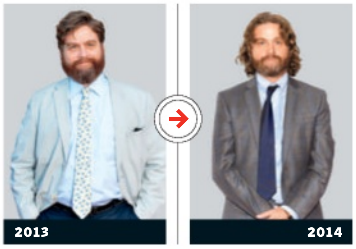
2012 → 2014

JIMMY KIMMEL



2006 → 2014

ANTHONY ANDERSON



2013 → 2014

ZACH GALIFIANAKIS

HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER: RON P. JAFFE/FOX; *HEDWIG AND THE ANGRY INCH*: JOAN MARCUS; *A MILLION WAYS TO DIE IN THE WEST*: LOREY SEBASTIAN; *GONE GIRL*: MERRICK MORTON; CHRIS PRATT: © MARVEL 2014; RUDD (2012): JOHN LAMPARSKI/WIREIMAGE.COM; RUDD (2014): FAMEFLYNET PICTURES; KIMMEL (2012): JEROD HARRIS/WIREIMAGE.COM; KIMMEL (2014): GREGG DEGUIRE/WIREIMAGE.COM; ANDERSON (2006): JASON MERRITT/FILMMAGIC.COM; ANDERSON (2014): ROBIN MARCHANT/GETTY IMAGES; GALIFIANAKIS (2013): FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES; GALIFIANAKIS (2014): GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/FILMMAGIC.COM; SMITH: ROGER KISBY/GETTY IMAGES

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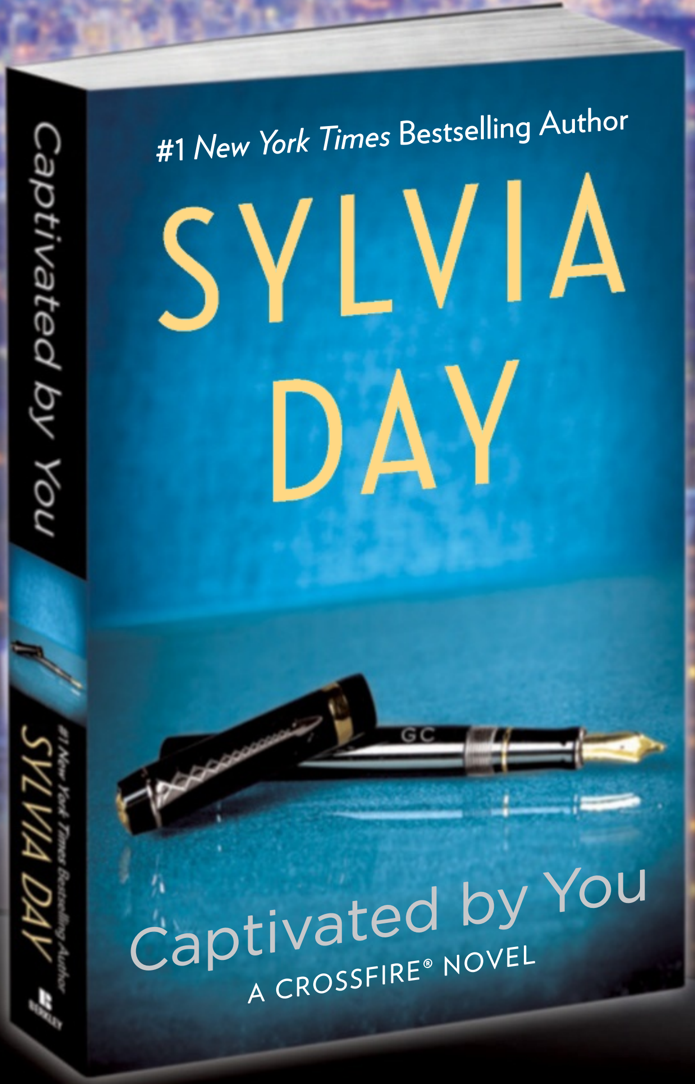
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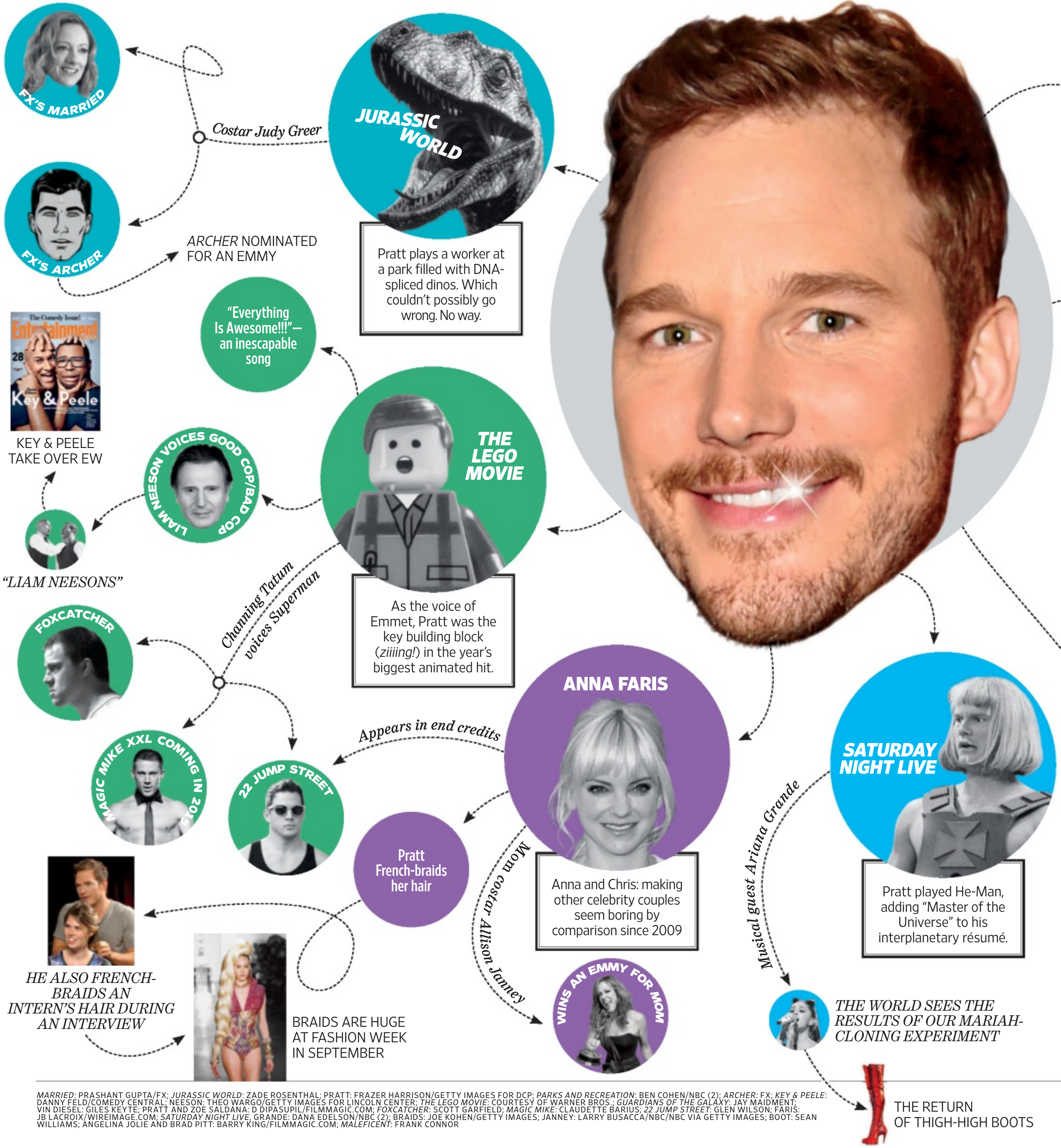
THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon became Four Degrees



JURASSIC WORLD
THE LEGO MOVIE
ANNA FARIS
SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE
FX'S MARRIED
FX'S ARCHER
LIAM NEESON VOICES GOOD COP/BAD COP
FOXCATCHER
MAGIC MIKE XXL COMING IN 2015
22 JUMP STREET
WINS AN EMMY FOR MOM

Pratt plays a worker at a park filled with DNA-spliced dinos. Which couldn't possibly go wrong. No way.

Costar Judy Greer

ARCHER NOMINATED FOR AN EMMY

"Everything Is Awesome!!!"—an inescapable song

KEY & PEELE TAKE OVER EW

"LIAM NEESONS"

As the voice of Emmet, Pratt was the key building block (*ziiiing!*) in the year's biggest animated hit.

Channing Tatum voices Superman

Appears in end credits

Pratt French-braids her hair

HE ALSO FRENCH-BRAIDS AN INTERN'S HAIR DURING AN INTERVIEW

BRAIDS ARE HUGE AT FASHION WEEK IN SEPTEMBER

Anna and Chris: making other celebrity couples seem boring by comparison since 2009

Mom costar Allison Janney

Musical guest Ariana Grande

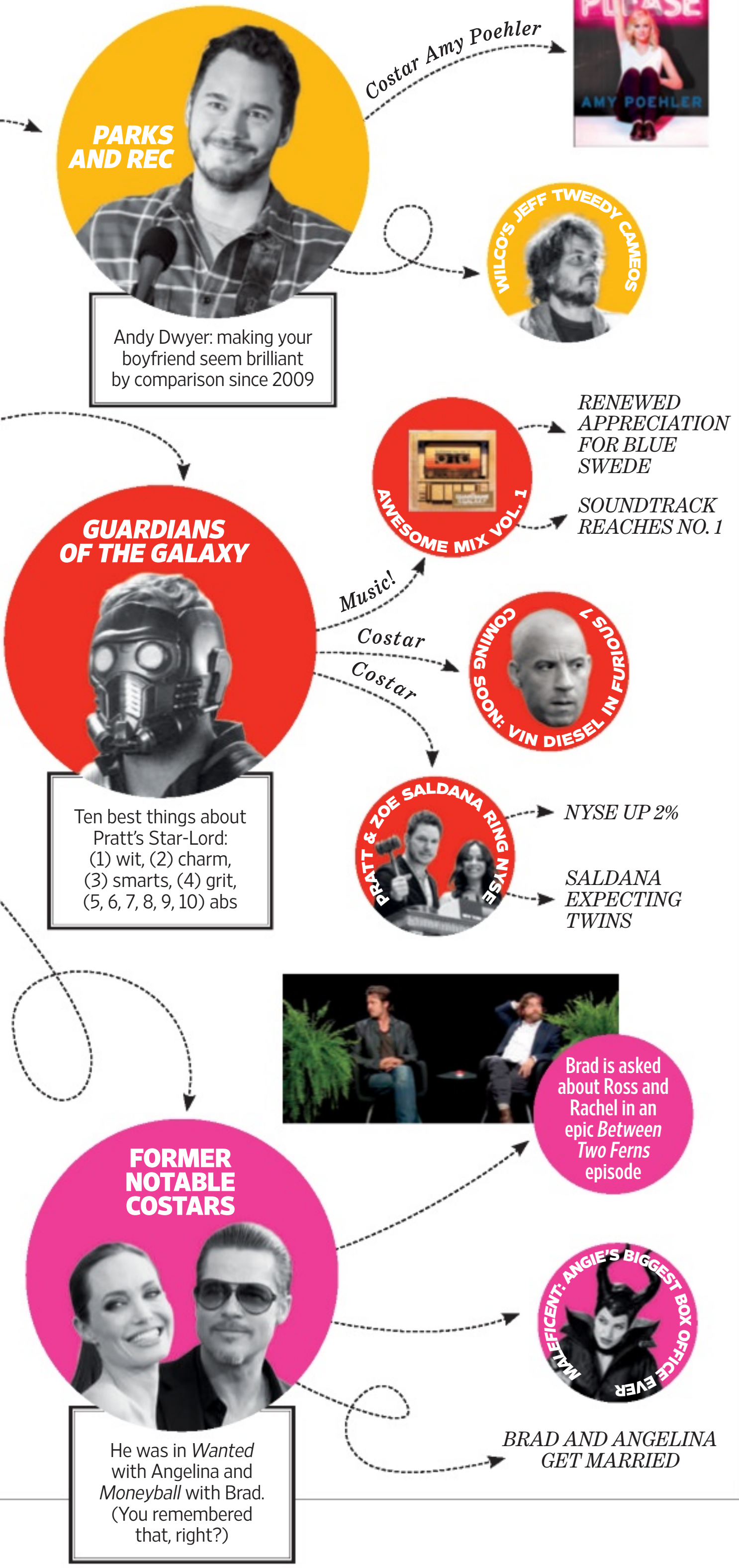
Pratt played He-Man, adding "Master of the Universe" to his interplanetary résumé.

THE WORLD SEES THE RESULTS OF OUR MARIAH-CLONING EXPERIMENT

THE RETURN OF THIGH-HIGH BOOTS

MARRIED: PRASHANT GUPTA/FX; *JURASSIC WORLD*: ZADE ROSENTHAL; PRATT: FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES FOR DCP; *PARKS AND RECREATION*: BEN COHEN/NBC (2); *ARCHER*: FX; *KEY & PEELE*: DANNY FELD/COMEDY CENTRAL; NEESON: THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES FOR LINCOLN CENTER; *THE LEGO MOVIE*: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.; *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*: JAY MAIDMENT; VIN DIESEL: GILES KEYTE; PRATT AND ZOE SALDANA: D DIPASUPIL/FILMMAGIC.COM; *FOXCATCHER*: SCOTT GARFIELD; *MAGIC MIKE*: CLAUDETTE BARIUS; *22 JUMP STREET*: GLEN WILSON; FARIS: JB LACROIX/WIREIMAGE.COM; *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*, GRANDE: DANA EDELSON/NBC (2); BRAIDS: JOE KOHEN/GETTY IMAGES; JANNEY: LARRY BUSACCA/NBC/NBC VIA GETTY IMAGES; BOOT: SEAN WILLIAMS; ANGELINA JOLIE AND BRAD PITT: BARRY KING/FILMMAGIC.COM; *MALEFICENT*: FRANK CONNOR

# of Chris Pratt


PARKS AND REC
Costar Amy Poehler
YES PLEASE
AMY POEHLER
WILCO'S JEFF TWEEDY CAMEOS
AWESOME MIX VOL. 1
RENEWED APPRECIATION FOR BLUE SWEDE
SOUNDTRACK REACHES NO. 1
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
Music!
Costar
Costar
COMING SOON: VIN DIESEL IN FURIOUS 7
PRATT & ZOE SALDANA RING NYSE
NYSE UP 2%
SALDANA EXPECTING TWINS
Brad is asked about Ross and Rachel in an epic *Between Two Ferns* episode
FORMER NOTABLE COSTARS
MALEFICENT: ANGIE'S BIGGEST BOX OFFICE EVER
BRAD AND ANGELINA GET MARRIED

Andy Dwyer: making your boyfriend seem brilliant by comparison since 2009

Ten best things about Pratt's Star-Lord: (1) wit, (2) charm, (3) smarts, (4) grit, (5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10) abs

He was in *Wanted* with Angelina and *Moneyball* with Brad. (You remembered that, right?)

BY *PHARRELL'S HAT*

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I FINALLY GOT A HEAD

I REMEMBER THE MOMENT clearly. I was just a young hat growing up in London—no older than a beanie, really—when I saw the performance given by the fedora in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* and said to myself, “Someday, I'm going to be famous.” But never in my wildest dreams would I have imagined it would happen like this. The millinery industry can be hard on big guys like myself (size 7½ and proud!), so I was filled with excitement when I learned Pharrell wanted to wear me to the Grammy Awards.

Then everything blew up. The next few weeks were a blur. I may have come from a milliner, but I was embraced by millennials. Everyone was talking about me, me, me; my Twitter account gained thousands of followers; and I signed a five-figure deal with Arby's to be its spokeshat. The night before the Oscars, I called up Aretha Franklin's hat from President Obama's inauguration and asked her how she dealt with her newfound fame. Naturally, she said, “Don't let it go to your head.” Indeed, there were times when I felt like I was wearing Pharrell and not the other way around. And while Skateboard P has moved on to other hats—and Blake Shelton—I'll be fine right here with my beef 'n cheddar.

---

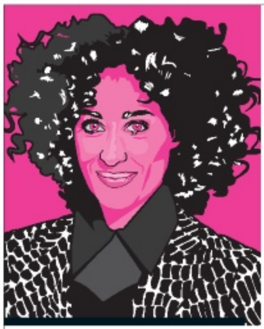
different restaurants; *“We just ate a ton o' food at this Indian place, and now this. Bang bang.”*

[2] An undefined sex act that can be performed while going “into the room”; *“Bang bang all over you...bang bang there goes your heart”*

▶ *THE YEAR* IN *WORDS* • **Groot** **[grüt]** *n.* An all-purpose term coined by *Guardians of the Galaxy*'s lovable sapling; "Groot" translates to "yes," "no," "hello," and "merchandising deal."

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I SAW MY HAIR ON TV



BY *TRACEE ELLIS ROSS*

I THINK WHAT IS IMPORTANT about Viola Davis taking her wig off on *How to Get Away With Murder* is that it illustrates that there is a mask that women are thought to have to wear. For black women, it can be a more complex mask. Our culture has created a very limited view of what beauty is and can be. I think right now television is one of the places where women are pushing up against that and saying, "You know what? I don't need to play this game anymore in order to be considered beautiful."

My mom [Diana Ross] is known for her big hair. So me embracing *my* big hair was not outside the frame of reference of where I come from. What I think is exciting is that to a certain extent, there is a revolution happening where black women are owning their own beauty, despite the standard of beauty that in the past has not had space for it.

I think it's huge that I'm wearing my natural hair texture on ABC in prime time. As Dr. Rainbow Johnson on *black-ish* (right), I think my hair is part of the reality of this woman's life. She has four children and is an anesthesiologist and a wife. She doesn't have a lot of time to fuss with beauty, so her look is pretty simple. I'm very conscious of how I wear my hair on the show, and yet it's the way I wear my hair as Tracee. You hire me, you hire my hair *and* you hire my ass. It's all coming with me.

THE YEAR IT GOT REAL

Annalise Keating shed her wig and shattered narrow beauty standards on *How to Get Away With Murder.*

The inmates' textured hairstyles inspired emotional story lines on *Orange Is the New Black.*

Dr. Johnson's hair on *black-ish* is exactly like Tracee Ellis Ross' hair in real life. Natural.

In *Scandal*'s season premiere, Olivia took a rest from her silky-smooth D.C. blowouts.

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ Diva wars took an intergenerational turn. (See: Midler/Grande and Lennox/Knowles.)

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

IT WAS HARD TO SAY GOODBYE

Grab a hankie. We had enough goodbyes this year to reduce even the toughest pop culture fan to tears. After nine years, Stephen Colbert is retiring his bloviating, conservative TV-pundit alter ego—along with his search for truthiness. (Colbert the man will go on to succeed David Letterman at the *Late Show.*) *Boardwalk Empire*'s Nucky Thompson headed to the big speakeasy in the sky, and the bikers from *Sons of Anarchy* rolled off into the small-screen sunset. Meanwhile, ***How I Met Your Mother*** and *True Blood* went out in grand (and, in the latter's case, Grand Guignol) style, with fan-enraging final seasons. Plus, the bell has already tolled for a handful of fall shows: *A to Z*, *Manhattan Love Story*, and *Bad Judge*. We hardly knew ye.

Of course, the hardest farewells were for the entertainers who left us in real life. 2014 was tragically full of surprising heartbreaks with the sudden deaths of Philip Seymour Hoffman, Robin Williams, and Mike Nichols. We also lost the last grande dame of Hollywood's golden era when Lauren Bacall died in August. And, it must be said, red carpets will never be quite the same without the searing wit of **Joan Rivers**. —KAT WARD

ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK: JILL GREENBERG/NETFLIX; *BLACK-ISH*: BOB D'AMICO/ABC; BETTE MIDLER: ROB KIM/GETTY IMAGES; ARIANA GRANDE: C FLANIGAN/GETTY IMAGES; RIVERS: LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES; *HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER*: RON P. JAFFE/FOX

ONE DIRECTION

ON the ROAD AGAIN TOUR 2015

CONCERT TICKETS MAKE A GREAT GIFT...

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07.24	WINNIPEG, MB
07.26	MINNEAPOLIS, MN
07.28	KANSAS CITY, MO
07.31	INDIANAPOLIS, IN
08.02	PITTSBURGH, PA
08.05	EAST RUTHERFORD, NJ
08.08	BALTIMORE, MD
08.18	COLUMBUS, OH
08.20	TORONTO, ON
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08.25	MILWAUKEE, WI
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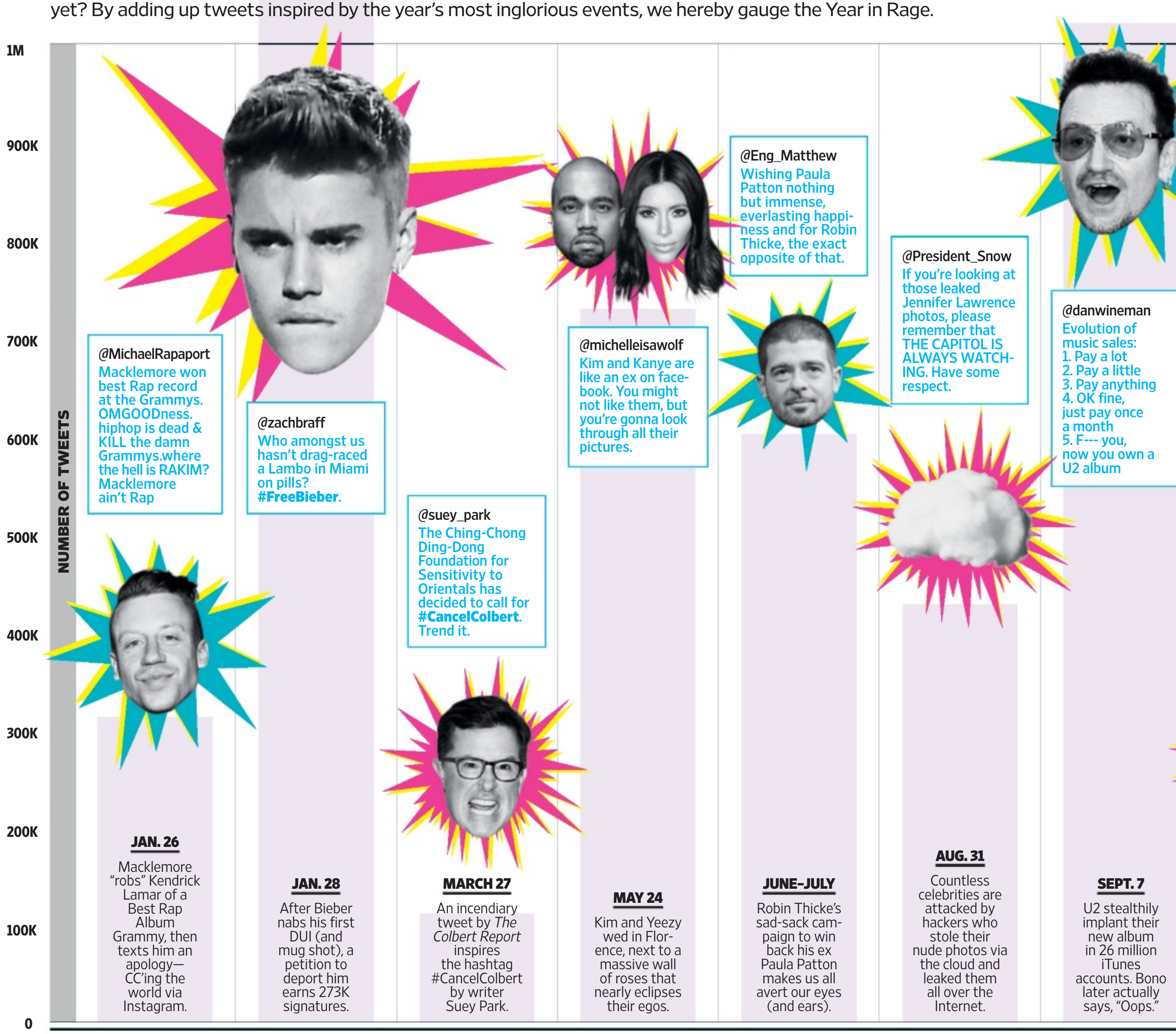
▶ *THE YEAR IN WORDS* • **I Am Not Famous Anymore** **[ī am nät fā-məs e-nē-mor]** Please, please pay attention to

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

TWITTER GOT PIIIIISSSSEDDDDD

A rascally man-child drag-raced a Lamborghini. Two fame hounds spent a mint on a wedding that was Liberace-level extravagant. And an old-guard supergroup invaded your iTunes account like a pack of musical Vikings. Is your blood boiling yet? By adding up tweets inspired by the year's most inglorious events, we hereby gauge the Year in Rage.



↑ 2.1 million tweets about Bieber's January arrest

@MichaelRapaport
Macklemore won best Rap record at the Grammys. OMGOODness. hiphop is dead & KILL the damn Grammys.where the hell is RAKIM? Macklemore ain't Rap

JAN. 26
Macklemore "robs" Kendrick Lamar of a Best Rap Album Grammy, then texts him an apology—CC'ing the world via Instagram.

@zachbraff
Who amongst us hasn't drag-raced a Lambo in Miami on pills? **#FreeBieber**.

JAN. 28
After Bieber nabs his first DUI (and mug shot), a petition to deport him earns 273K signatures.

@suey_park
The Ching-Chong Ding-Dong Foundation for Sensitivity to Orientals has decided to call for **#CancelColbert**. Trend it.

MARCH 27
An incendiary tweet by *The Colbert Report* inspires the hashtag #CancelColbert by writer Suey Park.

@michelleisawolf
Kim and Kanye are like an ex on facebook. You might not like them, but you're gonna look through all their pictures.

MAY 24
Kim and Yeezy wed in Florence, next to a massive wall of roses that nearly eclipses their egos.

@Eng_Matthew
Wishing Paula Patton nothing but immense, everlasting happiness and for Robin Thicke, the exact opposite of that.

JUNE–JULY
Robin Thicke's sad-sack campaign to win back his ex Paula Patton makes us all avert our eyes (and ears).

@President_Snow
If you're looking at those leaked Jennifer Lawrence photos, please remember that THE CAPITOL IS ALWAYS WATCHING. Have some respect.

AUG. 31
Countless celebrities are attacked by hackers who stole their nude photos via the cloud and leaked them all over the Internet.

@danwineman
Evolution of music sales:
1. Pay a lot
2. Pay a little
3. Pay anything
4. OK fine, just pay once a month
5. F--- you, now you own a U2 album

SEPT. 7
U2 stealthily implant their new album in 26 million iTunes accounts. Bono later actually says, "Oops."

SOURCE: CRIMSON HEXAGON

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ While we've always wanted to be trapped on a train with Chris Evans, after *Snowpiercer*, we're now hoping to be

DDDDD

me.

@SmallgGay
I'm not sure I believe the Sony hacking story. Who on earth would want to download the new "Annie"?

@levie
This is how it starts. One day Taylor Swift pulls her music from Spotify. The next, we're using AOL and having to hail taxis again.

NOV. 5
Taylor breaks up with Spotify. Then the streaming-music service creates mix-tape playlist to get her back.

NOV. 29
Hackers attack Sony Pictures and leak major films online. Is this possibly North Korean supreme leader Kim Jong-un's revenge for *The Interview*?

tortured by Tilda Swinton.

MACKLEMORE: TAYLOR HILL/FILMMAGIC.COM; BIEBER: THEO WARGO/GETTY IMAGES FOR THREE LIONS ENTERTAINMENT; COLBERT: STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE.COM; WEST: TOMMASO BODDI/GETTY IMAGES FOR DUJOUR; KARDASHIAN: SCOTT BARBOUR/GETTY IMAGES; THICKE: BRAD BARKET/GETTY IMAGES FOR BET; CLOUD: GETTY IMAGES; BONO: LUCA TEUCHMANN/GETTY IMAGES FOR KRYOLAN; SWIFT: JAMES DEVANEY/GETTY IMAGES; KIM JONG-UN: ED JONES/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; SWINTON: ANGELA WEISS/GETTY IMAGES; SMITH: DANA EDELSON/NBCU PHOTO BANK/GETTY IMAGES

↑ Performing "Stay With Me" in the March 29 episode of *Saturday Night Live*

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I BECAME A HOUSEHOLD NAME

BY *SAM SMITH*

SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE was one of the scariest nights of my entire life. I tried to beg my managers and my team to not do *SNL* because I thought it was way too early. But I was so, so wrong. It was incredible and it's broken me in America. That night, people were recognizing me a bit more. It was hours after, actually. You could feel the shift and you could feel the change physically in that moment in New York and it was amazing. It was really surreal.

Meeting Beyoncé was incredible. She said my voice is "like butter," which was very lovely, and I said, "Thank you." Mary J. Blige is so honest and lovely and calm. She's like a big sister to me. You realize that when you meet these people, they are just people, you know? As a kid I thought all these people were superhumans, but it's their talent that makes them superhuman.

I don't feel pressure to follow up *In the Lonely Hour*. It's hard to explain. I want to be a career artist. I actually like the idea of my career going in a wave. All I'm going to do is document my life and write about who I fall in love with, who I fall out of love with. I hope that's enough. I'm not going to beat myself up about it. As long as I'm proud of the work, then I don't care.

▶ *THE YEAR* IN *WORDS* • **Adele Dazeem** [ə-ˈdel da-ˈzēm] *n.* A celebrated vocalist, best known for her rendition of *Frozen*'s "Let It Go"; *Did you hear Jim Travolga say Adele Dazeem's name wrong at the Oscars?*

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

WE ALL GOT A BOOTY CALL

SIR MIX-A-LOT SHOULD really consider a career as a trend forecaster. The rapper was way ahead of his time when he proclaimed his love for a juicy booty on 1992's "Baby Got Back," because 2014 will undoubtedly go down as the Year of the Rear. Jason Derulo's "Wiggle" encouraged big butts to shake. Meghan Trainor defied those body-image expectations with "All About That Bass." Nicki Minaj even sampled "Baby Got Back" on "Anaconda." Then there was Jennifer Lopez and Iggy Azalea's duet, "Booty," basically the U.N. Summit of Ladies With Well-Endowed Cheeks. Possibly out of FOMO, Kim Kardashian crushed the competition last month with her naked, glazed bum in *Paper* magazine. (And it wasn't just the girls: Charlie Hunnam revealed his rump on *Sons of Anarchy* and had the Parents Television Council crying and most of the Internet cheering.)

Why all this focus on the backdoor? It's not sudden—we've been easing our way down. In the '90s, boobs were huge, both literally and figuratively. We moved on to abs in the 2000s, with Britney Spears displaying her midriff whenever she had the chance. Enjoy your time in the sun, butts. Hollywood can be fickle. If my theory is correct, Christina Aguilera should be releasing a new song about sexy kneecaps in 3...2...1... —TIM STACK

↓ (Clockwise) Kim Kardashian's cover; *Sons of Anarchy*; "Booty"

PAPER
NEW YORK
WINTER 2014 $10
BREAK THE INTERNET
KIM KARDASHIAN

BY *IDINA MENZEL*

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I COULDN'T LET IT GO

They had sent me a demo of "Let It Go" and I thought, "Oh, s---, this is going to be hard to sing." I knew *Frozen* was going to surprise people, but I didn't know it would stir up so many people to take ownership of the song. It's a nice marriage of social media with a zeitgeist moment. Every day I receive a video from a friend of their daughter singing "Let It Go" in the backyard. The *Rent* and *Wicked* years were remarkable, but this is especially extraordinary because I'm not a twentysomething anymore and I'm still able to empower young people.

It was a whirlwind of a year. My five-year-old son doesn't care about that stuff. On Halloween, when every little Elsa and their mother wanted to take pictures, my son was not having it! I've learned not to get swept away by the perfectionism. Imperfections make it better. It happened when John Travolta screwed up my name, it threw me out of this meditative place. I had to get back on track.

This year was going to be all about coming back to Broadway in *If/Then*. This crossover thing was a big hurdle for me, but next year, hopefully, there'll be another album and a world tour, to countries I haven't been where *Frozen* helped me sell some tickets. And when I go on tour, it's the same thing with "Defying Gravity"—of course I'll sing it every night. I sing it everywhere I go. I mean...it's my song!

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ The ALS Association turned the Internet into one big (delightful) wet T-shirt contest.

JAMIE DORNAN: BEN PRUCHNIE/FILMMAGIC.COM; CHANNING TATUM: JON KOPALOFF/FILMMAGIC.COM; BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH: MIKE PONT/FILMMAGIC.COM

▶ *THE YEAR* IN *WORDS* • **Belfie** **[bel-fē]** *n.* A butt selfie (often taken in a bathroom)

Amy Landecker, Jeffrey Tambor, and Alexandra Billings on *Transparent*; Laverne Cox

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

TV TRANSFORMED THE WAY WE THINK

IT'S EASY TO BELIEVE that pop culture has the power to change the world. It's rare to witness that change in real time, but that's what happened.

Across the country, our minds were opened to the varied experiences of transgender people by watching television. Laverne Cox—Litchfield's beloved hairdresser, Sophia, on *Orange Is the New Black*—endeared herself to both inmates and the Television Academy, becoming the first openly trans actor ever nominated for an Emmy. Then on Amazon, the new drama *Transparent*, about a transgender woman named Maura (Jeffrey Tambor) and her troubled family, was a hit with viewers and was hailed as one of fall's best TV shows by many critics (including this writer). On Broadway, Neil Patrick Harris sold out nearly his entire run in the musical *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* and won a Tony award for starring as the title character, a trans singer in a glam-rock band. These fully formed roles suggested that trans people aren't heroes or villains. They're just human.

For a certain generation of Americans, Sophia and Maura might be among the first transgender people they had ever let into their homes. And when postshow conversation turned to Cox's and Tambor's performances, we all learned something. Cox schooled talk-show hosts on trans etiquette, telling Katie Couric that it's impolite to ask about the state of a trans person's genitals, and then corrected Gayle King when she insisted that Cox had been born a boy. "I was 'assigned male at birth' is the way I like to put it," the actress said. "Because I think we're born who we are, and the gender thing is something someone imposes on you." Cox, hailed by *Glamour* magazine as a 2014 Woman of the Year, now uses her celebrity to give trans activism a public forum, such as making headlines for standing by CeCe McDonald, a trans woman who used deadly force to protect herself from attackers.

It's no longer enough to simply put trans characters on television. *Transparent* creator Jill Soloway, whose father is transgender, has made a point of hiring trans people as consultants and crew members. When she couldn't find a trans female TV writer for the second season of *Transparent*, she fielded short stories from trans women and hired the most talented writers. "We're helping make trans women TV writers," she told EW.

Of course, not everyone agrees on what qualifies as "progress." *Orange Is the New Black*'s showrunner, Jenji Kohan, opposes Soloway's "trans affirmative action" policy. "I think great writers should write great shows," she said at the *New Yorker* festival in October. "What you are in life shouldn't automatically make you what you do in your art." During an interview at SiriusXM, Cox ran into Neil Patrick Harris in the hallway and told him that she had "issues" with his musical because the character Hedwig changed her gender simply to get a ticket out of Berlin. Cox later told EW, "That's why it's important to have diverse trans stories out there, so that we don't just get one idea of who trans people are."

We still have a long way to go when it comes to telling those stories. Just two years ago, GLAAD released a 10-year study of trans characters on television and found that 54 percent of them contained negative representations. Antitransgender slurs and dialogue were present in at least 61 percent of the story lines. But the fact that trans characters are slowly evolving, along with the public's ideas of what trans people are like, suggests those numbers will improve—and that Hollywood can use its powers for good. So can you. Change the channel. Change the conversation. You might end up changing your mind. —MELISSA MAERZ

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ We thought Taylor took a "lonely Starbucks lover."

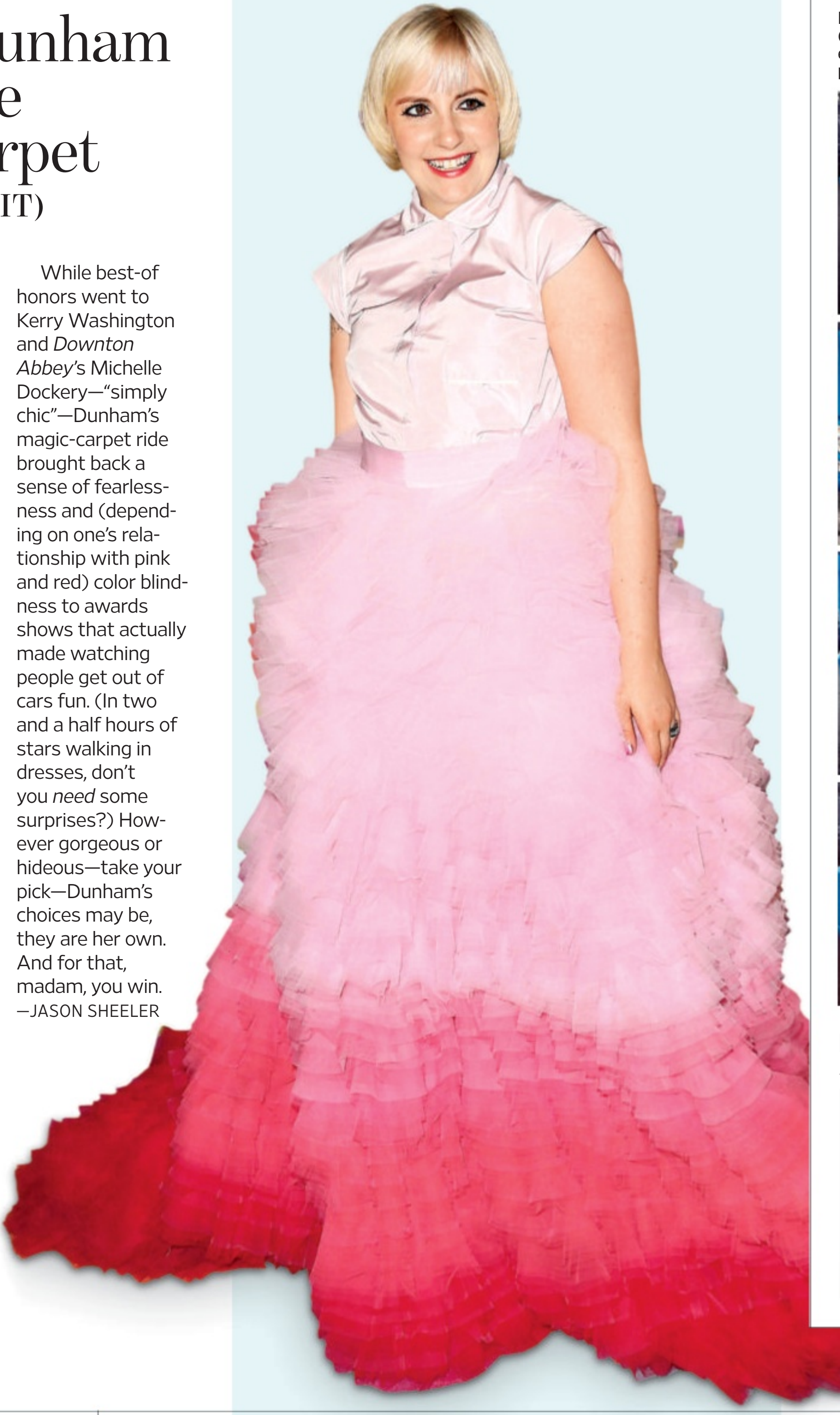
TRANSPARENT: AMAZON STUDIOS; COX: JOHN LAMPARSKI/WIREIMAGE.COM; TAYLOR SWIFT: KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE.COM

▶ *THE YEAR* IN *WORDS* • **YAASSSSS** **[yaaasssss]** ***n.*** A more emphatic way of saying "yes"

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

Lena Dunham Won the Red Carpet

(BY LOSING IT)



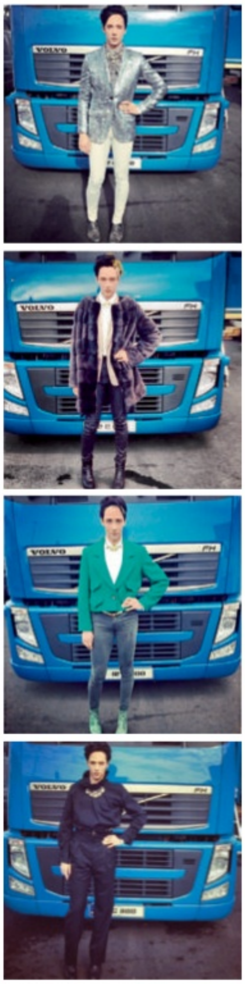
It's been 13 years since Björk laid an egg at the Academy Awards. And if the Oscars', Emmys', and Golden Globes' red carpets are the Triple Crown of Thoroughbred Gowns, that's nearly 40 nights of jewel-toned, fish-tailed, corporate-sponsored parade floats accessorized with borrowed diamonds and phonetically spelled designer names for E!'s Mani Cam ("MOH-neek Luh-HOO-lee-ay").

Then Lena Dunham arrived at the Emmys. The actress, *Girls* creator, and author showed up in a blushing flotsam of Giambattista Valli tulle that Dunham described as both "cake" and "sweatpants." We'll go with cake. Frosted. Layered. Highly caloric and gloriously messy. Verified and unverified fashion critics pounced. The best: "An inside-out Muppet." The worst: "Gwen Stefani's wedding dress."

While best-of honors went to Kerry Washington and *Downton Abbey*'s Michelle Dockery—"simply chic"—Dunham's magic-carpet ride brought back a sense of fearlessness and (depending on one's relationship with pink and red) color blindness to awards shows that actually made watching people get out of cars fun. (In two and a half hours of stars walking in dresses, don't you *need* some surprises?) However gorgeous or hideous—take your pick—Dunham's choices may be, they are her own. And for that, madam, you win.
—JASON SHEELER

WEIR NAILED IT

Figure-skating commentator (and newly ordained style expert) Johnny Weir made the podium every day in Sochi



PLUS: A HAT TRICK

At the Kentucky Derby

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ Beyoncé got really short bangs—and took the longest elevator ride of her life.

DUNHAM: FREDERICK M. BROWN/GETTY IMAGES; WEIR AT SOCHI: @JOHNNYGWEIR (4); WEIR AT OSCARS: STEPHEN J. COHEN/WIREIMAGE.COM; BEYONCE: KEITH HEWITT/GETTY IMAGES

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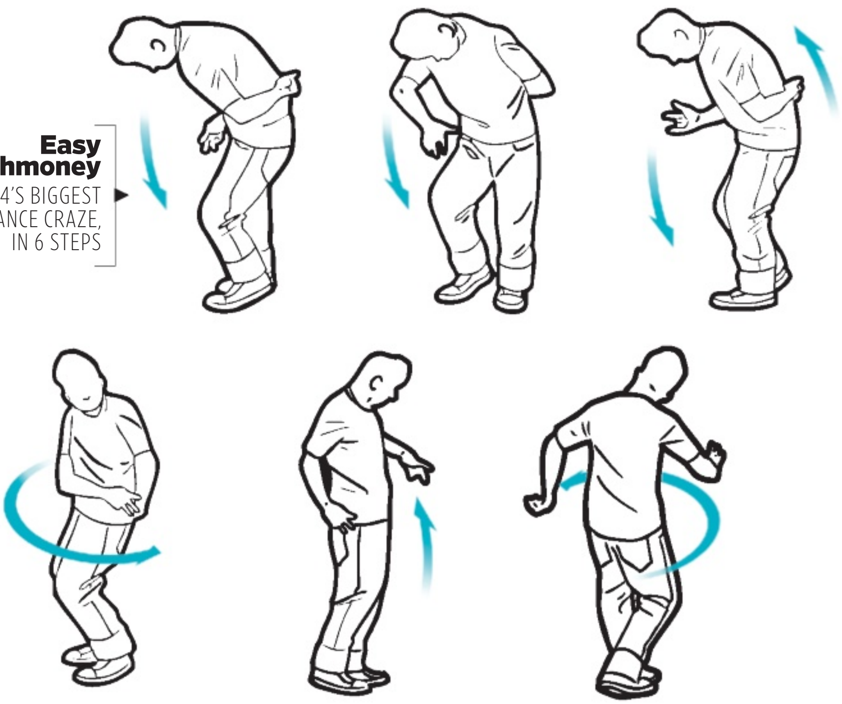
THE YEAR IN *WORDS* • **Bass** [bās] *n.* A curvaceous, full figure (see: Meghan Trainor); *"I'm all about that bass/'Bout that bass, no treble"*

Easy Shmoney
2014'S BIGGEST DANCE CRAZE, IN 6 STEPS



THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

I TAUGHT TAYLOR SWIFT HOW TO DANCE

BY *BOBBY SHMURDA*

WHEN IT WAS TIME to make the video for "Hot N---a," my friends woke me up, dragged me out of my house, and said, "Let's go make a video." The Shmoney Dance in the video was natural. I came up with it right on the spot. I dance all the time. I dance when people aren't looking, but this time we just happened to have the cameras on. I knew it was big when people started asking me to come perform it and a lot of girls started giving me their number. When I saw Beyoncé and Taylor doing my dance, it was a good feeling. I've been dancing to other people's music and doing their dances my whole life, so for them to do my dance, it feels good. I've been teaching people how to do the Shmoney Dance, but I really can't explain it. I just do it. You gotta feel it.

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT ▶ Coming out had no drama.

THIS WAS THE YEAR THAT...

THESE THINGS DIDN'T HAPPEN

BEYONCÉ & JAY Z
SPLIT

JUSTIN BIEBER
WAS DEPORTED

GEORGE R.R. MARTIN RELEASED A NEW *GAME OF THRONES* BOOK

ADELE
RELEASED 25

MATTHEW McCONAUGHEY WON AN EMMY

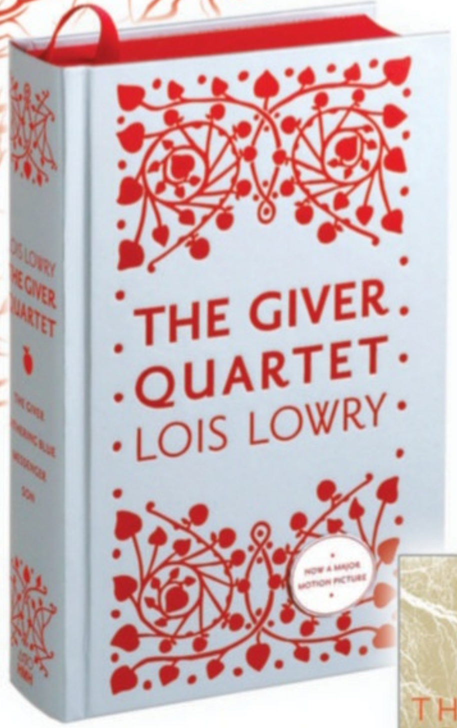
SHIA LaBEOUF WENT TO PRISON

WE BOUGHT AN
APPLE WATCH

WRITTEN BY Kyle Anderson, Eric Renner Brown, Bill Keith, Chris Lee, Adam Markovitz, Stephanie Schomer, Molly Simms, Marc Snetiker, Dan Snierson, Tim Stack, Keith Staskiewicz, Nina Terrero, and Carolyn Todd

BEYONCE AND JAY Z: MYRNA SUAREZ/WIREIMAGE FOR PARKWOOD ENTERTAINMENT; LABEOUF: ANITA BUGGE/WIREIMAGE.COM; ELLEN PAGE: MIKE COPPOLA/GETTY IMAGES

DANCE ILLUSTRATIONS BY **JASON SCHNEIDER**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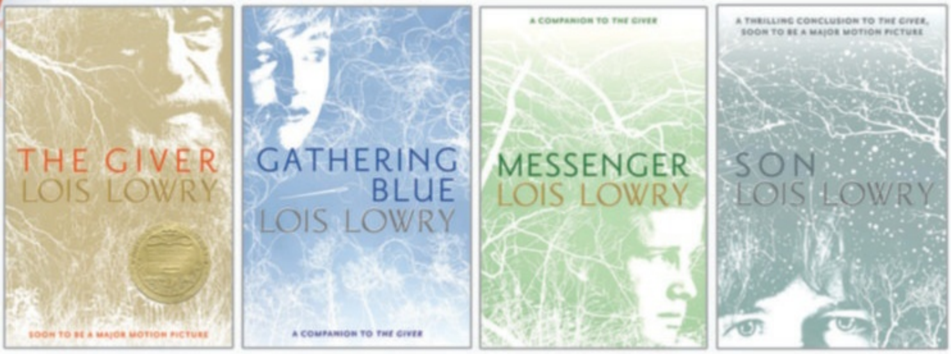
THE GIVER
LOIS LOWRY
SOON TO BE A MAJOR MOTION PICTURE
GATHERING BLUE
LOIS LOWRY
A COMPANION TO THE GIVER
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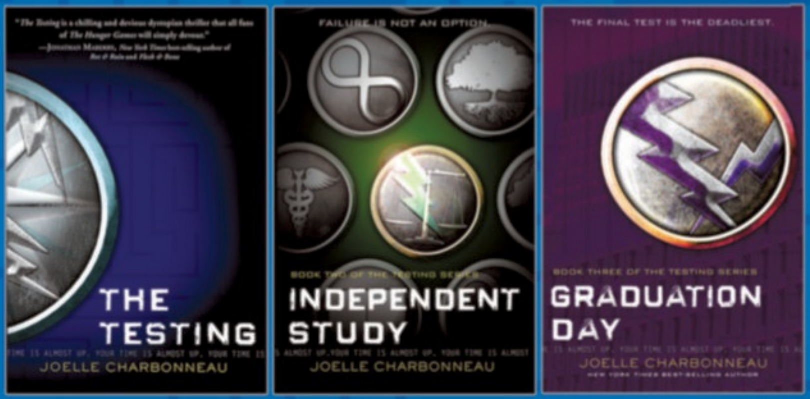
THE BEST? THE BRIGHTEST?
THE DEADLIEST?


THE TESTING
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FAILURE IS NOT AN OPTION
INDEPENDENT STUDY
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THE FINAL TEST IS THE DEADLIEST
GRADUATION DAY
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*EntertainmentWeekly.com

Jimmy Fallon photographed on Nov. 20, 2014, in New York City

JIMMY
FALLON

Entertainer Of The Year

BY RAY RAHMAN
PHOTOGRAPHS BY ART STREIBER

How do you turn a 20th-century institution like ***The Tonight Show*** into a 21st-century viral hit? Give it to **Jimmy Fallon**. After taking over Jay Leno's desk in February, the comic-turned-host-turned-merry-prankster has boosted viewership on air and online with laughs, celebrity high jinks, and musical mayhem—and there's more to come in 2015.

BALLOON LETTERS BY HANDMADEFONT

FOR MOST PEOPLE, MEETING BARBRA STREISAND WOULD be the highlight of their year. If, somehow, you were permitted to sing with her, it would win the decade. But to duet with Babs in front of a national television audience? That would be an unforgettable, once-in-a-lifetime event—unless you're Jimmy Fallon. ¶ "People on the street are like, 'Dude—you were with Barbra,'" he says. "'Barbra! That's fantastic!' And I'm like, 'Really? Did we do that? That's amazing, but...when was that, even?'" ¶ It happened this past September on *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*, marking an end to Streisand's 50-plus-year absence from the program. But even here in his office at 30 Rock in Manhattan, Fallon admits he has a hard time keeping track of 2014. "I don't ever really know what I'm doing until we have some time off or someone asks about it. They'll say, 'You did a sketch with Carol Burnett on *The Tonight Show*.' And I'll be like, 'I did? That's right—I totally did that!'"

Fallon totally did a lot of things during his first year as host of *The Tonight Show*. To start: He sang karaoke with Emma Stone, did the Stanky Legg with Will Smith, landed a song with will.i.am on the Hot 100 chart, staged a drum-off between Will Ferrell and a Red Hot Chili Pepper, and exposed Daniel Radcliffe as a skilled rapper. All that's just from the first page of *The Tonight Show*'s most popular YouTube videos, where each clip has at least 10 million views; the highest, "Lip Sync Battle With Emma Stone," is at 36 million and counting. Stone famously won that battle, but Fallon won the war. Since this time last year, *The Tonight Show* has exploded from 514,000 to 1.8 million Twitter followers; on Facebook, it went from 765,000 to 4 million followers; and on YouTube, it rose from

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) WARDROBE STYLING: BRIAN COATS/THE WALL GROUP; WARDROBE DRESSING: STEPHANIE BIEAR; HAIR: MARIE ARGENZIANO; GROOMING: CYNDIE LOU BOEHM/TRACEY MATTINGLY; PROP STYLING: SHAWN PATRICK ANDERSON/BRIDGE ARTISTS; SUIT: BURBERRY

(Clockwise from top left) Fallon duetting with Barbra Streisand on Sept. 15; performing a sketch with Carol Burnett on Oct. 6; Emma Stone lip-synching on April 28; interviewing Bradley Cooper on Oct. 17

1.5 million to 5.2 million subscribers. That's enough to eclipse every other late-night host from Jimmy Kimmel to David Letterman. Thanks to Fallon, *The Tonight Show* has gone viral.

Meanwhile, *The Tonight Show* proper—the version that the National Broadcasting Company airs every weeknight after your local news—is not only No. 1 in late-night, it's also up in the ratings. Yes, *up*, as in higher than it was in Jay Leno's hands the year before. Which is all backward: When the 40-year-old Fallon took over in February, Leno's graying viewership was supposed to bolt at the sight of this new kid, and the young audience Fallon had courted during his *Late Night* years was supposed to be too busy Snapchatting to sit in front of a TV. "The ratings are almost, like, double," says Fallon, full of pride if not math. Among the all-important 18–49 demo, average viewership is 31 percent higher, a trajectory that happens only if you're the NFL, a zombie, or Shonda Rhimes.

Part of the key to Fallon's success has been turning the show into the hottest party in town. On any given night you'll find a friendly fun house full of celebrities, games, surprise cameos, music, and good vibes all around. "The show feels different," says Leno, who returned as a guest on Nov. 7. "It's young, it's music-oriented. He does stuff I couldn't get away with. At some point, you can't pretend to know all of Jay Z's songs anymore." Leno even goes so far as to evoke Johnny Carson, the *Tonight Show* icon revered by every comedian behind a desk. "He's probably more like Johnny than any other host," Leno says. "Johnny was very boyish when he was 40 years old."

"He's probably more like Johnny [Carson] than any other host."
—JAY LENO

Fallon's endless energy makes for great TV—though it doesn't leave him with much time to savor the moment. "It's so fast and hectic and busy," he says. "None of us really realize what we're doing as we're doing it."

"THE KARDASHIAN THING I'M KIND of sick of," Fallon says to no one in particular. "It blew up real quick, but it didn't really break the Internet. The Internet still works."

He and his head writers are sitting around a table in Fallon's office, where they assemble every morning for the daily creative meeting. It's Thursday, and they're going through packets of potential jokes for tonight's monologue, tomorrow's Thank You Notes and NFL Superlatives, and next week's Hashtags. Punchlines about Kim Kardashian's *Paper* magazine cover, which hit the Internet one full day ago, are starting to wear out the room.

So Fallon moves on: "There's a board game for kids called Gooey Louie, where you pull boogers out of his nose. If you pull the wrong booger, his brain flies out." The table bursts into laughter. Producer Gavin Purcell pulls up the ad on his laptop and plays it on one of the two giant TVs hanging in the office. It's as ridiculous as they'd hoped—and perfect fodder for one of the goofy games that have become the show's main attraction. "Like, how does Channing Tatum play Pictionary?" Fallon asks. "How could you see that, unless you hang out with Channing Tatum at his house?"

WITH STREISAND: DOUGLAS GORENSTEIN/NBC

More games mean less time for guest interviews, which happens to work to Fallon's advantage. Critics have cited his interview style—too complimentary, even fanboyish—as a weakness. Fallon himself admits there are still improvements to be made ("I could always be better at interviewing," he says), but he points out how much he's grown since he started on *Late Night* in 2009. "I'd rush through everything. I'd talk to De Niro and just run through everything. I'd be sweating. They'd tell me to stretch, because we didn't fill up enough time.... But I just kept getting better at talking to guests, and not worrying about time. After five years of doing *Late Night*, you just get better."

If Fallon is no Dick Cavett, the show might be better for it. The traditional chat-on-a-couch format was forged at a time when hosts didn't have to compete with the Internet, videogames, or *Breaking Bad* on Netflix. "If you watch old interviews on talk shows from 30 years ago, they can be more meandering," says showrunner Josh Lieb. "Maybe more boring, even. We can't afford those boring minutes."

Celebrity guests on *The Tonight Show* have followed suit by agreeing to high jinks that would normally be swatted down by a phalanx of publicists. Bradley Cooper smashed eggs on his own face, while Glenn Close competed in a pie-eating contest. The segments give A-list stars a platform to prove that they can have fun, maybe even be relatable. Best-case scenario: A clip of their antics goes viral, earning them endless free publicity for whatever project they're promoting. Worst-case: They're just another in a long line of celebrities looking silly on the show. Regardless, they have the comfort of knowing that Jimmy Fallon is on their side. "We've set up an environment here where he has the trust of guests, where they'll come in to do these crazy things," Purcell says. "That's the secret to the virality of our show—that, and we happen to tape five hours of television every week."

To keep things feeling fresh, the staff likes to rotate the games as much as possible, and also invent new ones. "We'll spend a meeting going through weeks of celebrities coming up and figuring out what to do with them," Fallon says.

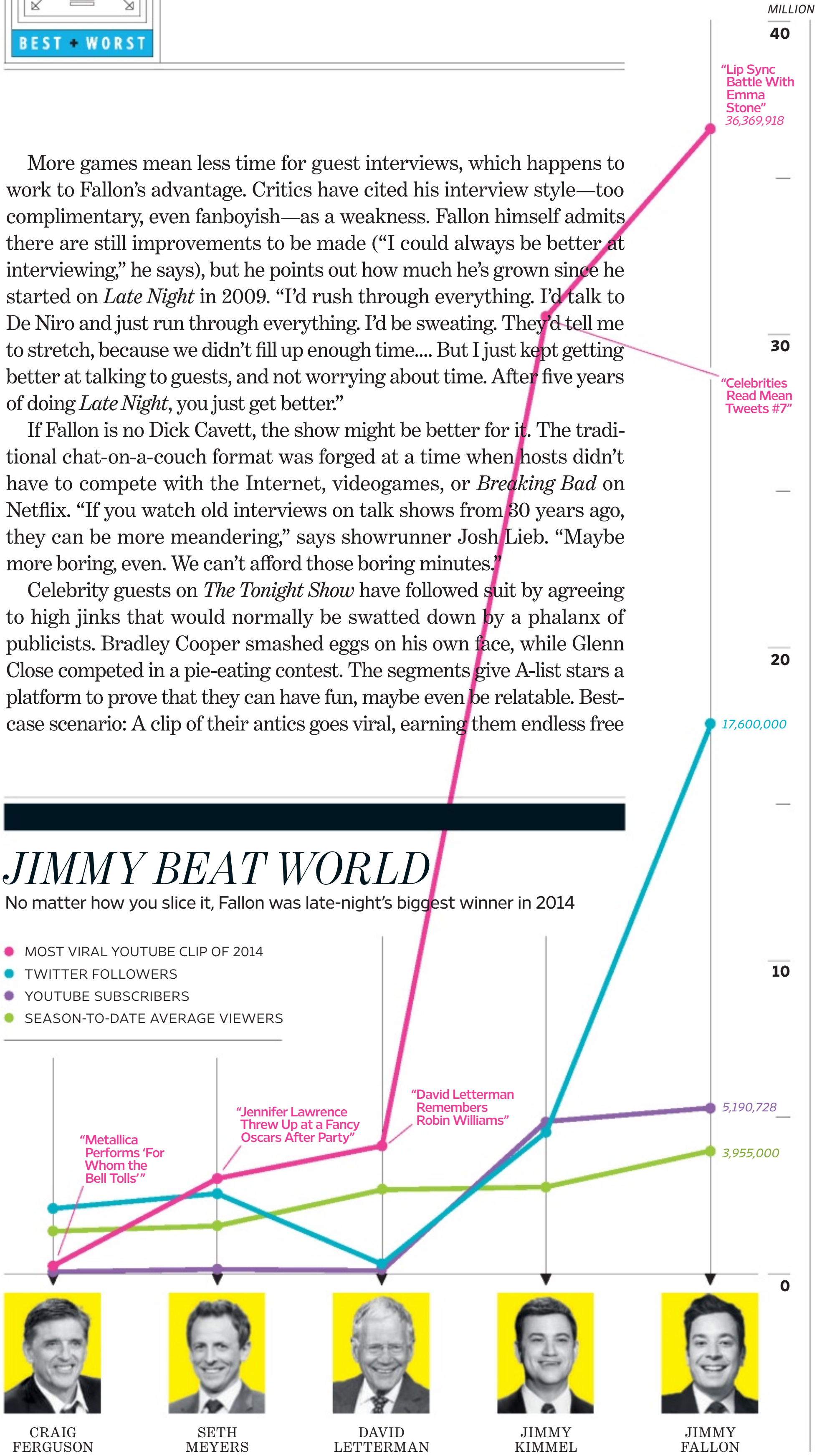
Landing on a bit is only part of it—they have to make sure it works, too. The R&D phase varies. "Face Balls, that was something we did in the office as a joke," explains Fallon. "You sit in two chairs with a beach ball, and you just throw it as hard as you can. No one's getting hurt, but it's so stupid and funny to watch." Then there's the trickier matter of getting a celebrity to agree to it. In the case of Face Balls, the team wasn't sure if anyone would sign on, so they kept pitching it. "Julia Roberts was like, 'Yeah, I'll do something!' We pitched her 10 ideas, and one of them was Face Balls. She was like, 'Done—Face Balls.' We were like, 'You sure? Of all the ones we pitched, you wanna do Face Balls?' And she says, 'Totally, let's do it. It's never been done. I wanna see if it's fun.'"

This is bad news for the show's interns, who have to endure whatever the guests will endure—more than once. "They're our guinea

JIMMY BEAT WORLD

No matter how you slice it, Fallon was late-night's biggest winner in 2014

● MOST VIRAL YOUTUBE CLIP OF 2014
● TWITTER FOLLOWERS
● YOUTUBE SUBSCRIBERS
● SEASON-TO-DATE AVERAGE VIEWERS



“They’re amazing people on *Saturday Night Live*. But I feel like we’re equal, if not better, than that crew.” —JIMMY FALLON

pigs,” Lieb says. “Our segment producers go through the process and work out the mechanism of it. Like the game Pop Quiz, where someone had the idea of having water balloons that pop on people’s heads when they get quizzed. They spent basically three months fine-tuning that one in rehearsal time, sticking interns in barber chairs and popping balloons on their heads.”

There have been duds, though. “We had a kayak race with Cameron Diaz, where we put wheels on the kayak,” Fallon recalls. “It was just okay. It didn’t really work because I kept falling out of the kayak. She was a good sport, but we probably won’t do that again.”

The immense amount of rehearsal required to make the show pop on screen can be daunting, but Fallon has the training for it from his days on *Saturday Night Live*. “They’re amazing people on *Saturday Night Live*. But I feel like we’re equal, if not better, than that crew,” he continues. “Because *Saturday Night Live*, they are truly magicians—but we’re doing this five days a week.... It just feels like show business—it feels like you’re doing a variety show! There’s no net. The audience is just there, and they’re into it.”

Well, part of the audience is. A large portion of the show’s viewers aren’t at the taping or in front of their TV screens at home—they only watch the show online. That’s why *The Tonight Show* now has a dedicated digital team led by Purcell. And their efforts are paying off, even if it’s not always in the traditional way. “I’m not getting more money if I do a bit that goes viral,” Fallon notes. “No one is. I don’t get anything. Not even a

Starbucks gift card—nothing! We're in it for the fun of it. If I do 'Ew!' with will.i.am, it's for fun. Can we get it to chart on the *Billboard* 100? That'd be cool. Can we do a video? We can probably figure out some sort of budget thing—why not? How many things can we get into pop culture right now?" His most recent victory: getting "Lip Sync Battle" its own spin-off on Spike TV.

IT'S A WARM LATE-NOVEMBER evening, and NBC is having Jimmy Fallon do some manual labor. He's outside 30 Rock's Sixth Avenue entrance holding the giant electrical plug that will light up *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*'s very own marquee.

NBC doesn't make a habit of handing out marquees, so a lot of people have come to share the moment with Fallon: his staff, family members, network brass, and (behind barricades) a large crowd of fans on the street. They all cheer him on as he plugs it in, and once it's lit—his name in blue neon—Fallon poses for pictures, first with Lorne Michaels, who executive-produces the show, and then with his parents.

"This is definitely the most exciting year of my life," Fallon says later. He's not just talking about *The Tonight Show*: He and his wife, Nancy, are also busy raising their 16-month-old daughter, Winnie. "The baby and the show are both starting and growing. It's interesting to raise both of them." Sometimes he manages to multitask. "In the morning, when my wife watches the show—we can't stay up that late—the baby will see me and yell, 'Dada!' She's really becoming a comedy nerd. She'll know all the members of Monty Python before she's 2." The family man even bought a truck, which he keeps at his house in the Hamptons. "I cruise around in that thing, play country music. Makes me feel like a man. I think I'm going to start wearing cologne."

> "We went to Rao's the other night, and he's singing and hanging out with everybody. Who you see on that TV is who you get in real life."
> —DREW BARRYMORE

But thanks to his rising star, there are some places the man can't take his truck anymore. "It's hard to get to the movies," he says. These days, he says he has to either catch an advance screening or just wait until it hits iTunes. "It's the point of no return—once the movie's out, I can't see it. I haven't even seen *Guardians of the Galaxy* yet."

Still, Fallon's longtime friends insist he hasn't changed. "There's obviously a tremendous amount more recognition, but he's the same person," says Drew Barrymore, who costarred with Fallon in 2005's *Fever Pitch*. (That's also where Fallon met his future wife, Barrymore's producing partner.) "He's as friendly as when we were all doing *Fever Pitch*. When you go out with him, he talks to every single person that he encounters. He entertains—we went to Rao's the other night, and he's singing and hanging out with everybody. Who you see on that TV is who you get in real life."

Fallon still gets awestruck when he reflects on his year. "I'll always remember the first night, when U2 performed on the roof. I was running through the halls to get upstairs and see the band, but Stephen Colbert had dumped pennies down my jacket and down the back of my shirt at the beginning of the show. So I was running, and pennies were falling out of my pants and my sleeves! We ran up, got the elevators, went all the way up to the Top of the Rock—and Bono was looking at me like, 'I'm gonna go for it.' You could feel it, this was going to be something cool. It was such a moment. It was a New York City moment, it was a music moment. It checked off a lot of the boxes of how powerful TV could be."

His dream is for the show to feel like that every night. "I wish we had more time," he says. "I could do another half hour. I could do an hour-and-a-half show, easy. Because we just run out of time—we have so many ideas and things we want to do."

Tops on his to-do list? "I've gotta up my lip-synch game," he says. "I've gotta beat Emma Stone at lip-synching. That's my 2015 goal." ■

(PREVIOUS SPREAD) FERGUSON: MONTY BRINTON; MEYERS: LLOYD BISHOP; LETTERMAN: JEFFREY R. STAAB; KIMMEL: RANDY HOLMES; FALLON: JAMES WHITE/NBC

HOW DOES

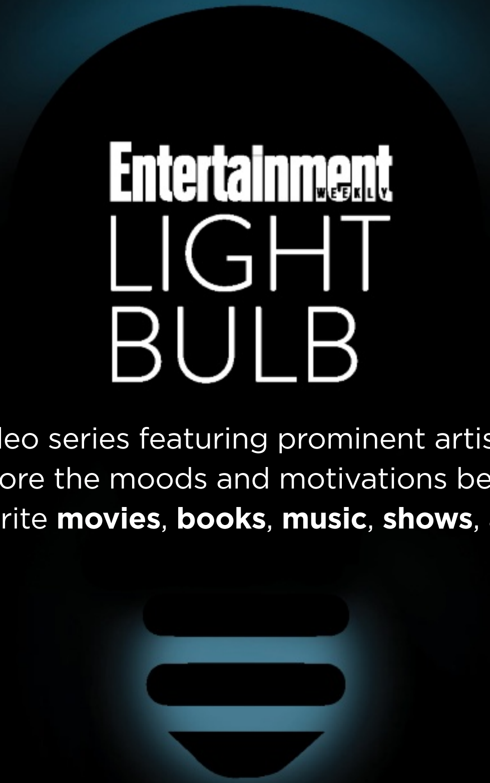
A GREAT MOVIE

AN ENGAGING BOOK

A HILARIOUS SHOW

AN UPBEAT SONG

MAKE YOU FEEL?



Entertainment WEEKLY

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THE YEAR'S *BEST* FILMS

BY CHRIS NASHAWATY

Movies

1/

WHIPLASH

RATED R

THERE ARE NO TWO words in the English language more harmful than *good job*. Such is the philosophy of J.K. Simmons' monstrous music instructor Terence Fletcher in Damien Chazelle's thrillingly brutal masterpiece *Whiplash*. With his bullet-shaped bald head, mad-dog eyes, and bite that's every bit as bad as his bark, Fletcher is like a vicious Marine drill sergeant at Parris Island. His latest recruit is Andrew Neiman (brilliantly played by Miles Teller), a cocky jazz-drummer prodigy whom he puts through a meat grinder of physical and verbal abuse. We've all seen movies like this before: A naive kid is beaten down only to then be built back up. But Chazelle has more on his mind than 106 minutes of bebop, bleeding palms, and bluster. He's grappling with Big Ideas—ambition, alienation, and the psychological toll of pursuing perfection—via two actors who boil over with bare-knuckle intensity. *Whiplash* is a film that electrifies you with its live-wire beat.

←
ILLUSTRATION BY
CUN SHI

2/ BOYHOOD

RATED R

Richard Linklater has always understood that life is a collection of small moments. Occasionally they feel meaningful. But more often than not, they seem unremarkable... trivial. Those are the ones that end up shaping who we become. Episodically shot with the same cast over 12 years, *Boyhood* is a movie of small moments. It's an epic in miniature. And Ellar Coltrane, the young actor at the heart of Linklater's time-lapse cinematic experiment, slowly grows up before our eyes like a photograph being developed in the darkroom. His story is the centerpiece of Linklater's greatest and most humane film. We're not only invested in Coltrane's Mason as he slips from innocence into adulthood, we're rooting for him, hoping that everything will turn out okay. *Boyhood* is a work of huge ambition that never for a second feels anything less than intimate.

BEST BADASSES
Scarlett Johansson in *Lucy* and *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* and Emily Blunt in *Edge of Tomorrow*

BEST USE OF TIME
In *X-Men: Days of Future Past*, Quicksilver (Evan Peters) moves so fast seconds become minutes

BEST SOUL MATES, MILLENNIALS
Shailene Woodley and Ansel Elgort in *The Fault in Our Stars*

BEST SOUL MATES, GEN-X
Rosamund Pike and Ben Affleck in *Gone Girl* (come on, they deserve each other!)

BEST SOUL MATES, BOOMERS
Alfred Molina and John Lithgow in *Love Is Strange*

↑ Ralph Fiennes and Tony Revolori in *The Grand Budapest Hotel*

3/ THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL

RATED R

Wes Anderson's films have always been easier to admire than embrace. They're like hermetic, handcrafted dioramas in which every last detail, no matter how tiny, has been exquisitely attended to—often at the sake of real emotional engagement. But with *The Grand Budapest Hotel*, a deliriously funny and wistfully romantic fairy tale about a time long lost to history, the director finally found the human touch. It suits him. Set in the fictional European nation of Zubrowka sometime between the world wars, the film tells the story of a world-class concierge and gigolo named Monsieur Gustave (a marvelously persnickety Ralph Fiennes) and his ever-loyal lobby boy (the droll, deadpan Tony Revolori). A grab bag of dizzy intrigue swirls around them and the supporting cast of colorful oddballs, all while the ominous specter of fascism looms just outside the frame. For once, Anderson has created a confectionary universe that not only dazzles your eye but also breaks your heart.

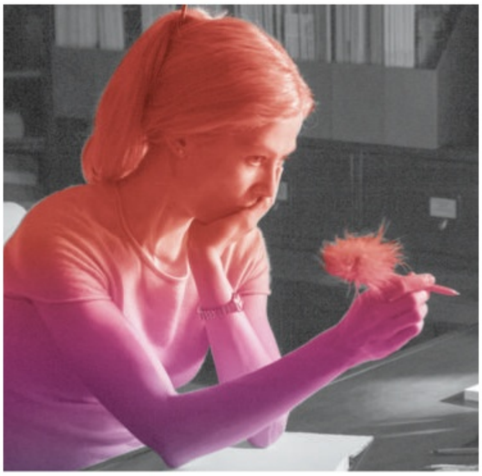
4/ LIFE ITSELF

RATED R

Roger Ebert was a towering cultural figure. So much so that he sometimes bordered on being a thumb-waving cartoon. But in Steve James' beautiful documentary about the late film critic's extraordinary life, he's unforgettably human. Despite the Pulitzer Prize he won at the *Chicago Sun-Times* and the small-screen fame

BEST WORST WIFE/

ROSAMUND PIKE IN *GONE GIRL*



MEET AMY DUNNE: loving wife, sadistic sociopath. Forever puncturing the "cool girl" myth in David Fincher's scabrous thriller, British actress Pike plays Amy as an icy blond perfectionist with the instincts of a criminal mastermind (duh—she went to Harvard). "Amazing Amy" is introduced as a model of long-suffering domestic forbearance, but is gradually revealed to be much more than she seems. Her blood-stained disappearance sets her husband (Ben Affleck) on a collision course with a murder rap—and Pike's slippery performance keeps us on our toes till the very end. "Amy is the female brain—both the wonderful and darker parts of being feminine," says Pike, 35. "She's complicated. She's goal-oriented. She's out to win." Mission. Accomplished.
—CHRIS LEE

CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER SOLDIER: ZADE ROSENTHAL; *EDGE OF TOMORROW*: DAVID JAMES; *X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST*: ALAN MARKFIELD; *THE FAULT IN OUR STARS*: JAMES BRIDGES; PIKE: MERRICK MORTON

▶ *SOUND BITE* • "I am Groot." —GROOT (VIN DIESEL), *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*

that came from his on-air partnership with Gene Siskel, Ebert was a populist. He spoke plainly, he never pretended to be smarter than his audience, and his enthusiasm (and occasional lack thereof) was infectious. He was one of us. But he was more than that. In *Life Itself*, we learn that Ebert was a recovering alcoholic who could be prickly—until he met his beloved wife, Chaz. The most poignant moments in the film are the small, intimate ones shared by the couple as Ebert undergoes a grueling series of surgeries to battle the cancer that stole his voice but never succeeded in quieting him. In the end, *Life Itself* is really a love story about one man's love of words, his wife, and the movies.

5 / SELMA

RATED R

Directing a Great Man biopic can be a treacherous high-wire act. If you genuflect too deeply, you risk hagiography. If you show too many warts, you can lose sight of what made the subject great in the first place. In her soaring snapshot of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., director Ava DuVernay walks that wire with the grace of a Wallenda. She wisely avoids the temptation of chronicling the full sweep of the civil rights leader's eventful life—a mistake of comprehensiveness that too many filmmakers make. Instead, like Steven Spielberg did with *Lincoln*, she zeroes in on one brief chapter of King's legacy: the explosive three-month period in 1965 when he led a campaign of civil disobedience to force LBJ to sign the Voting Rights Act. As King, British actor David Oyelowo reclaims the man from the myth, showing us his humor, self-doubt, and all-too-human faults. Though it takes place 50 years in the past, *Selma* never feels like an old, yellowed newspaper. It burns with a relevance that, considering today's tragic headlines, is urgent.

↑ Colman Domingo, David Oyelowo, André Holland, and Stephan James in *Selma*

LIFE ITSELF: ART SHAY; *SELMA*: ATSUSHI NISHIJIMA; FALLON: PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER

FALLON'S PICKS

"**Birdman** was awesome. I think that might be my favorite film this year. Emma Stone was fantastic. She did that one monologue where she went off on Michael Keaton. And I was like, 'Oh, don't screw this up because this could be a home run! This ball's going deep!'"

BREAKOUT

JENNY SLATE

••• For years, Slate has been stealing scenes on *SNL*, *Parks and Recreation*, and *Kroll Show*—and stealing hearts in her short video series starring Marcel the Shell. But in 2014, the 32-year-old finally got top billing as a neurotic comic who faces the consequences of an unplanned pregnancy in the laugh-then-cry-then-laugh-again indie *Obvious Child*. "It feels, like, much better than having a bat mitzvah," says the actress, who will next appear in the 2015 drama *Digging for Fire*, directed by Joe Swanberg (*Drinking Buddies*). "On a bat mitzvah, you're like, 'Usually in school everyone is mean to me, and now they're just here because their parents made them.' And this is like, 'You're here because all these people who love this project trust you.'" Either way: Mazel tov! —ADAM MARKOVITZ

▶ *SOUND BITE* • "Now, as in the beginning, I belong to the front. You belong to the tail.

BEST LONG-SUFFERING MOMS
Patricia Arquette, *Boyhood*, and Laura Dern, *The Fault in Our Stars* and *Wild*

BEST USE OF HORNS
Angelina Jolie, *Maleficent*

WORST USE OF HORNS
Daniel Radcliffe, *Horns*

MOST EGREGIOUS PRODUCT PLACEMENT (EVER, IN THE HISTORY OF CINEMA)
Transformers: Age of Extinction

BEST TITLE OF A BAD MOVIE
Sex Tape

WORST TITLE OF A GOOD MOVIE
Edge of Tomorrow

WORST BIBLICAL EPIC
Noah
Just kidding. It's *Exodus: Gods and Kings*
No, no, wait! It's *this* one!
Son of God

↑ Ben Affleck and Tyler Perry in *Gone Girl*

6 / GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY

RATED PG-13

When it comes to superhero movies, I have become an agnostic. I have neither the faith of a fanboy nor the knee-jerk derision of a men-in-tights heathen. But if there's one movie that's come the closest to making me a believer, it's James Gunn's *Guardians of the Galaxy*. Marvel's merry band of squabbling misfits goosed anarchic life into a genre that tends to get mired in existential heaviosity. And what's not to love about a posse of antiheroes that includes Chris Pratt's cocky Star-Lord and Zoe Saldana's green-skinned assassin, plus a mound of muscles, a foulmouthed raccoon, and a grunting tree named Groot? *Guardians* works precisely because it's so unlike every other comic-book movie. At last, an excitingly unpredictable blockbuster.

7 / GONE GIRL

RATED R

Let's admit right from the get-go that the degree of difficulty in pleasing everyone who devoured Gillian Flynn's bruise-black beach read was off the charts. And I certainly get why some fans of the novel walked out of the theater disappointed. Movie adaptations never mesh with the way we envision characters on the page. But I *loved* David Fincher's *Gone Girl*. I loved it as a bleak account of modern love after it's curdled, as a wicked satire of cable-news scandal-mongering, and as just a good old-fashioned dark-as-hell thriller. Fincher's film managed to tease us, play with our loyalties, and sucker punch us with surprise twists most of us already knew were coming. There was no film this year that left me with a sicker smile on my face.

8 / SNOWPIERCER

RATED R

Considering the limitless possibilities of science fiction, it's shocking how many movies serve up the

BEST COMEBACK /

MICHAEL KEATON IN *BIRDMAN*

IN 1992 Keaton followed up his massively successful turn as the Caped Crusader with the sequel *Batman Returns*. But then his Batman didn't return. After more than two decades without another role of that size—by choice as much as by opportunity—Keaton flew back into the conversation this year with *Birdman*, a gonzo backstage comedy-drama from director Alejandro G. Iñárritu. The role is so bespoke that it's practically meta: Riggan Thomson is a Hollywood actor whose heyday is a memory and who's trying to recapture the spotlight long after he walked away from his own superhero franchise. Keaton, 63, plays Riggan with a perfect cocktail of self-destructive hubris and panicked desperation. He's the center around which the whole crumbling enterprise revolves, and he keeps everything in orbit with a star's gravity. It's a performance that made us realize how much we'd missed him. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION: ILM; *GONE GIRL*: MERRICK MORTON; MBATHA-RAW: BJARNE JONASSON/TRUNK ARCHIVE

When the foot seeks the place of the head, a sacred line is crossed. Know your place. Keep your place. Be a shoe.” —MASON (TILDA SWINTON), *SNOWPIERCER*

BREAKOUT

GUGU MBATHA-RAW

••• If you didn’t hear about (or watch) her this year, we suggest you play catch-up, fast. Mbatha-Raw, 31, had a hell of a 2014, sinking her teeth into two divergent films, both about women fighting to free themselves from social constraints. In *Belle*, she starred as a biracial aristocrat in 18th-century England, a woman of privilege regarded as an outsider. In *Beyond the Lights*, she played a pop diva struggling to reconcile her manufactured persona with her true self. The actress relished portraying a performer stripped of her showbiz (and emotional) armor. “It’s rare that you get all that glamour and then can take it all off in one person’s journey,” she says. Mbatha-Raw will be even busier in 2015, appearing in the Wachowskis’ *Jupiter Ascending*, the Keanu Reeves legal thriller *The Whole Truth*, and an as-yet-untitled Will Smith sports drama. So when someone asks you next year if you’ve ever heard of (or watched) her, you can say, “Oh, totally. Where have *you* been?”

—NICOLE SPERLING

BREAKOUT

JACK O'CONNELL

••• Jack O'Connell probably wasn't on your radar this past summer, but his untethered performance in the gritty prison drama *Starred Up* hinted that a new star might be on the rise. *Unbroken* pretty much proves it. In the WWII epic directed by Angelina Jolie, O'Connell, 24, plays Louie Zamperini, an American soldier who survived a plane crash, 47 days at sea, and more than two years in a Japanese POW camp. Jolie handpicked the British actor because she saw an untamed quality in him. "He's full of fire," she says. And full of nerves, it turns out. Making your first major film is no joke. "There were some mornings I'd wake up with that feeling," says O'Connell, who will appear in two dramas next year, *'71* and *Tulip Fever*. (He's also rumored to star alongside George Clooney and Julia Roberts in Jodie Foster's *Money Monster*.) "But sometimes you have to choose to listen to the thing that tells you that you can do it." —SARA VILKOMERSON

same basic vision of the future. Thankfully, there are still directors like Bong Joon-ho, whose dystopian saga *Snowpiercer* bristled with such idiosyncratic weirdness that it felt like a fever dream. Set some years down the road, after an attempt to counteract global warming has backfired and forced the frozen-over planet's remaining population to live on a locomotive circling Earth, the film is a breakneck metaphor for class warfare. At the front of the train is the decadent elite; in the rear, the soot-faced huddled masses (led by Chris Evans) plotting revolution. Despite the movie's gonzo flourishes (ladies and gentlemen, I give you Tilda Swinton...), it boils down to a prison-break thriller. But what a prison! *Snowpiercer* sucks you into its strange and disorienting world so fully, you'll feel dizzy and drunk as the end credits roll.

9 / BIRDMAN

RATED R

Everybody loves a comeback story. But few are as welcome—and winking—as Michael Keaton's in Alejandro G. Iñárritu's *Birdman*. Keaton, who achieved his most indelible moment on the A list as Batman in the late '80s and early '90s, is Riggan Thomson, the onetime star of the blockbuster Birdman films who's faded into obscurity, a fate the film regards as worse than death. If you're rattling your worry beads, fretting that *Birdman* is just a meta storytelling parlor game, fear not. I mean, it is that. But not *just* that. To reclaim his fame, Riggan has staked what's left of his savings (and his sanity) on a Broadway play. As the show stumbles toward disaster, he retreats deeper into his head, where his gravel-voiced Birdman alter ego mocks him. Because Iñárritu's film is so chaotically funny and stylishly shot, it's easy to overlook how cleverly it dissects celebrity, the theater, and even mental illness. More than anything, though, *Birdman* is a long-overdue reminder of Keaton's singular gifts as an actor.

10 / JODOROWSKY'S DUNE

RATED PG-13

Easily the geekiest and most obsessive documentary I saw all year,

O'CONNELL: DAVID JAMES

BEST WORST TEACHER /

J.K. SIMMONS IN *WHIPLASH*

MUSIC PROFESSOR Terence Fletcher wields tough love like a shiv. His mission: to forge greatness by applying physical and psychological pressure to his students, especially precocious drummer Andrew (Miles Teller). Fletcher's rants leave marks on them and us. After all, wasn't he the sweet dad from *Juno*? Simmons has built a career playing memorable supporting gay guy designed in a laboratory." —MAC (SETH ROGEN) ON TEDDY (ZAC EFRON), *NEIGHBORS*

↑ H.R. Giger in *Jodorowsky's Dune*

Frank Pavich's *Jodorowsky's Dune* is an exhumation of the weirdest movie never made. In the mid-'70s, eccentric Chilean auteur Alejandro Jodorowsky (*El Topo*) tried and failed to adapt Frank Herbert's sci-fi talisman *Dune*. The false starts, bizarre detours, and cult luminaries attached to the project are probably more interesting than the film would've been. But Pavich argues (convincingly) that *Star Wars*, *Alien*, and *The Terminator* wouldn't exist as we know them were it not for one man's epic fail. A delightful celebration of a visionary whose dream never got the chance to live outside his head.

SIMMONS: DANIEL MCFADDEN; *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*: © MARVEL 2014; *DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES*: WETA; *THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL*: MARTIN SCALI

characters, including Schillinger, a sadistic inmate on the HBO prison drama *Oz*. "When I first met J.K.," says *Whiplash* writer-director Damien Chazelle, "I told him, 'Remember how you were in *Oz*? I want to make that guy look like the teacher in *Mr. Holland's Opus*.'" Simmons, 59, sympathized with Fletcher's quest for excellence, but not his brutal methods. "In my experience, that can be antithetical to creating artistic genius," he says. That doesn't mean he didn't have fun, though. "Smacking Miles around was a joyous day on the set."
—JEFF LABRECQUE

BEST RIDES

TRAIN /
SNOWPIERCER
The globe-circling locomotive in Bong Joon-ho's bonkers action thriller is part Orient Express, part Marxian nightmare.

MILANO /
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY
Star-Lord's space vehicle is cutting-edge tech, but when he plays his '70s mixtape, it's like he's piloting a giant Trans Am.

APES ON HORSEBACK /
DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES
How do angry, highly evolved simians travel through the forest? By hard-charging atop sleek black steeds, naturally.

ELEVATOR /
THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL
Of course a lavish pink hotel in a fictional European nation would boast a lift painted wall-to-wall in gleaming candy-apple red.

BLACK HOLE /
INTERSTELLAR
Looking to save humanity? Get sucked into a black hole and hang out in the five-dimensional space lurking behind your bookshelf. Got that?

▶ *SOUND BITE* • "Everything is awesome!" —*THE LEGO MOVIE*

THE WORST MOVIES OF THE YEAR

BY CHRIS NASHAWATY

1 / NYMPHOMANIAC: VOLUMES I & II
I don't know what's more depressing: the tepidly transgressive, petulant-child posturing of enfant terrible Lars von Trier in his two-part slog, or the critics who bent themselves into knots looking for a non-existent feminist subtext in the Danish auteur's art-house provocation. Then again, maybe it's just Shia LaBeouf's dodgy British accent. What I'm certain of is this: *Nymphomaniac* is, was, and shall always be pretentious hooey and hackwork.

2 / TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION
Hands down, the most idiotic blockbuster of the year. Michael Bay's rock-'em-sock-'em sequel raked in more than $1 billion worldwide despite being a shamelessly cynical orgy of FORTUNE 500 product placement and about as narratively coherent as your average funny-pages word jumble. With the fate of the world at stake, you should at least care who wins in the end. Me, I was just relieved the damn thing was over.

3 / LET'S BE COPS
Let's not.

4 / TRANSCENDENCE
We haven't given up on you, Johnny Depp. But you can do a lot better than this preposterous techno-thriller that felt more like *Max Headroom* than *The Matrix*. Owning your own private island in the Caribbean is God's way of telling you that you can occasionally say no.

5 / THE MONUMENTS MEN
George Clooney has directed a couple of great films. This airless WWII caper isn't one of them. It's the movie equivalent of listening to seven guys hum the national anthem for two hours.

(From top) *Let's Be Cops; Transcendence; The Monuments Men; Transformers: Age of Extinction*

BEST TRAIL GUIDES /

MIA WASIKOWSKA IN *TRACKS*
REESE WITHERSPOON IN *WILD*

THE MOVIES LOVE tales of men communing with nature. (Think *Cast Away*, *Into the Wild*, *127 Hours*.) But this year, two women ventured into the great outdoors and made cinema all the better for it. In September, Wasikowska, 25, crossed the Australian desert with four camels and a dog in *Tracks*, propelled by nothing more than a need to be free. And in this month's *Wild*, Witherspoon, 38, goes on a soul-healing trek along America's Pacific Crest Trail. Based on the experiences of real women (writers Robyn Davidson and Cheryl Strayed, respectively), both films are elegant, understated meditations on the beauty of solitude and the invaluable power of silence. Together, these two characters hike some 2,800 miles, every last one of them lived to the fullest. —NICOLE SPERLING

LET'S BE COPS: FRANK MASI; *TRANSCENDENCE*: PETER MOUNTAIN; *THE MONUMENTS MEN*: CLAUDETTE BARIUS; *TRANSFORMERS: AGE OF EXTINCTION*: ILM; *WILD*: ANNE MARIE FOX; *TRACKS*: MATT NETTHEIM

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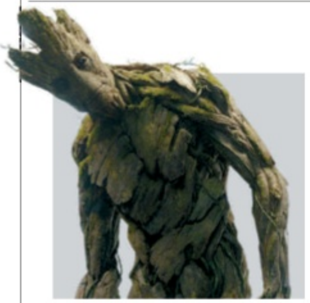
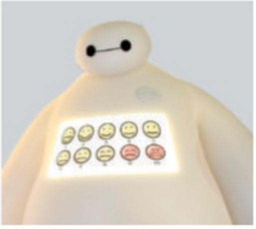
BEST SIDEKICKS

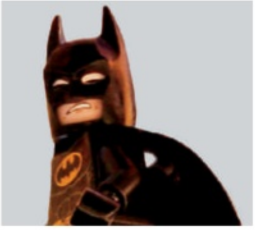


① / **GROOT**
Guardians of the Galaxy



② / **BAYMAX**
Big Hero 6

③ / **TARS**
Interstellar



④ / **BATMAN**
The LEGO Movie

⑤ / **PETE (DAVE FRANCO)** *Neighbors*

▶ *SOUND BITE* • "Ape not kill ape." —CAESAR (ANDY SERKIS), *DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES*

CRITICAL MASS

Here's a look at some of the best- and worst-reviewed movies of 2014*

THE 40 BEST	EW	IMDb	METACRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
BOYHOOD	A	85	100	99	95
WHIPLASH	A	88	87	96	90
BIRDMAN	A–	88	89	94	90
CITIZENFOUR	B+	83	88	97	89
LIFE ITSELF	A	81	87	98	89
THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL	A–	82	88	92	87
JODOROWSKY'S DUNE	A	82	79	98	86
THE LEGO MOVIE	A	79	82	96	86
FORCE MAJEURE	A–	78	86	93	86
PRIDE	B	81	80	94	85
NIGHTCRAWLER	B+	82	76	95	84
LOVE IS STRANGE	A	72	83	97	84
GONE GIRL	A	84	79	88	84
THE WIND RISES	A–	79	83	89	84
SNOWPIERCER	A	70	84	95	83
GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY	A–	83	76	90	83
DAWN OF THE PLANET OF THE APES	B+	79	79	91	83
HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2	B	81	76	92	83
X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST	B+	82	74	92	83
BIG HERO 6	B+	83	75	89	82
FOXCATCHER	B–	78	82	86	82
TIM'S VERMEER	A	79	76	89	81
LOCKE	A	71	81	89	80
EDGE OF TOMORROW	B+	80	71	90	80
CALVARY	B–	75	77	89	80
THE IMITATION GAME	B+	84	71	85	80
FRANK	A–	70	75	93	79
CAPTAIN AMERICA: THE WINTER...	B+	79	70	89	79

THE 40 BEST CONTINUED	EW	IMDb	METACRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
THE GUEST	B+	71	76	91	79
DEAR WHITE PEOPLE	B	66	79	91	79
INTERSTELLAR	B–	89	74	73	79
THE SKELETON TWINS	B+	75	74	87	79
ONLY LOVERS LEFT ALIVE	B	73	77	85	78
THE TRIP TO ITALY	A–	74	75	86	78
A MOST WANTED MAN	B	70	73	91	78
THE DROP	B	76	68	89	78
THE THEORY OF EVERYTHING	B+	78	72	83	78
VENUS IN FUR	C+	72	69	91	77
TRACKS	A	72	78	81	77
THE FAULT IN OUR STARS	B	81	69	80	77

THE 10 WORST

	EW	IMDb	METACRITIC	ROTTEN TOMATOES	AVG.
MOMS' NIGHT OUT	C–	54	25	18	32
WALK OF SHAME	D	60	25	12	32
VAMPIRE ACADEMY	C	56	30	9	32
TYLER PERRY'S THE SINGLE MOMS...	C+	47	31	16	31
NO GOOD DEED	C	58	26	10	31
I, FRANKENSTEIN	C	52	30	3	28
AMERICA: IMAGINE THE...	C	58	15	8	27
A HAUNTED HOUSE 2	D	47	17	8	24
THE LEGEND OF HERCULES	C+	42	22	3	22
LEFT BEHIND	F	32	12	2	15

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*ONLY INCLUDES FILMS RELEASED BEFORE DEC. 1, 2014

GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY: © MARVEL 2014; *BIG HERO 6*: © DISNEY; TARS: DOUBLE NEGATIVE; *THE LEGO MOVIE*: COURTESY OF WARNER BROS.; *NEIGHBORS*: GLEN WILSON; *HOW TO TRAIN YOUR DRAGON 2*: DREAMWORKS ANIMATION; *THE IMITATION GAME*: JACK ENGLISH; *X-MEN: DAYS OF FUTURE PAST*: PHILIPPE BOSSE; *INTERSTELLAR*: MELINDA SUE GORDON; *WALK OF SHAME*: JAMIE TRUEBLOOD; *THE LEGEND OF HERCULES*: SIMON VARSANO; *LEFT BEHIND*: TEDDY SMITH

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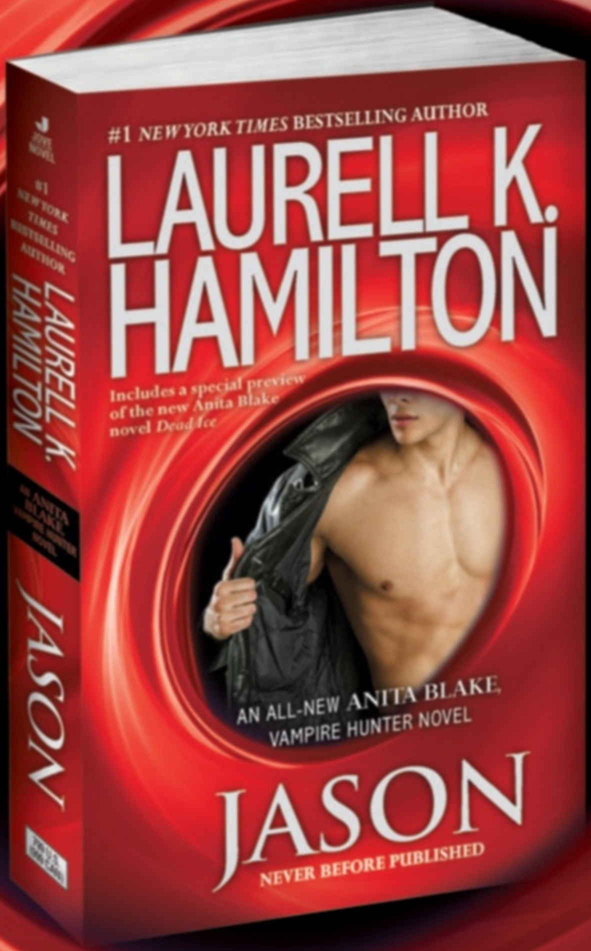

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THE YEAR'S *BEST* SHOWS

BY JEFF JENSEN AND MELISSA MAERZ

Television

1

TRANSPARENT

AMAZON

YES, IT'S A DRAMA about three adult siblings (Amy Landecker, Gaby Hoffmann, and Jay Duplass) who have a trans parent (Jeffrey Tambor as Maura, formerly Mort). But that's not the only reason this show from Jill Soloway feels so groundbreaking. Maybe it's that Maura's identity is the most solid one in the family, considering that her kids are still figuring out who they are. Or maybe it's that *Transparent* challenges the idea that great drama needs heroes or antiheroes: Every character is both at once, making you love them one moment and hate them the next. The show also offers sharp observations about the strange intimacy of siblings, the reinvent-yourself culture of Los Angeles, and the hard-to-admit fact that our parents' sexuality plays a formative role in our own. But its most powerful message is that Maura's experience is so ordinary, because no one's self-image matches the way others see them, whether they're trans or not.

←

ILLUSTRATION BY

SIMON PRADES

2 / RECTIFY

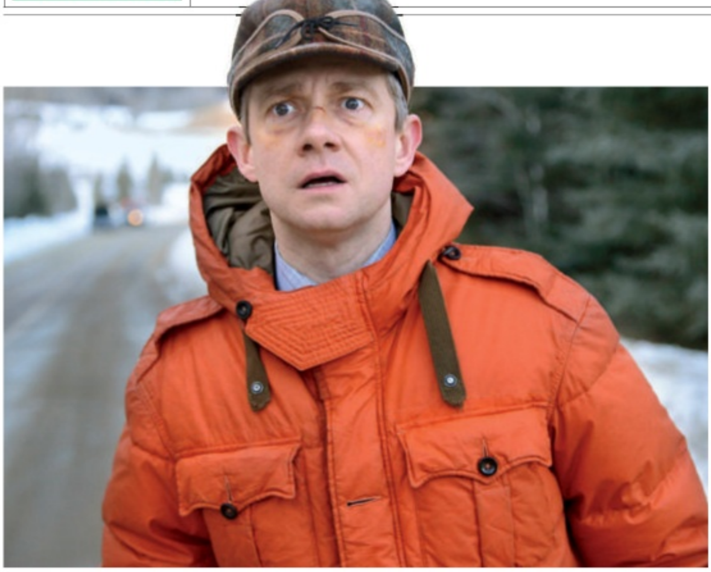
SUNDANCETV

The long goodbye to the antihero era has been fixated on redemption. *Sons of Anarchy* was cynical about it. *Mad Men*, surprisingly hopeful. Searching the hazy in-between is *Rectify*, a drama about a liberated death-row convict bewildered by his freedom. Creator Ray McKinnon elevated his plaintive saga in season 2 by delving more deeply into a lost soul and those damaged by his brokenness as they pursued flawed strategies for reclamation and repair; and by remaining committed to truth-finding, patient pacing, and careful straddling of naturalism and subjectivity. *Rectify*, a spiritual drama most humane, exemplifies the best qualities of the redemptive process not in its story but in the telling.

3 / FARGO

FX

American Horror Story may have reinvented the anthology format, and *True Detective* may have



Martin Freeman on *Fargo*

burnished its allure, but it was *Fargo* that worked it to near perfection. Writer Noah Hawley appropriated the setting, wit, and worldview of the Coen brothers' 1996 classic to create his own response to an era of trendy *Breaking Bad*. Solverson (Allison Tolman) is a policewoman of sound mind, big heart, and fearless regard for a culture lousy with demented, desperate, dumb men like Billy Bob Thornton's trickster devil, Martin Freeman's significance-starved schemer, and Colin Hanks' knight-errant. TV needs more of her, and fewer of them, and that was *Fargo*'s point, don'tchaknow.

4 / PLEASE LIKE ME

PIVOT

This Australian comedy is the perfect coming-of-age story for people

who'll never grow up. And that's still true in its wickedly funny second season, which finds 26-year-old Josh (Josh Thomas) and his friends working through postcollegiate angst by drawing tattoos on a baby and cracking jokes about maxi pads. But when Josh's mom (Debra Lawrance) lands back in the psychiatric hospital, it also becomes a surprisingly thought-provoking drama about mental illness. The episode where Josh confronts his mother about her suicide attempt features a particularly gutting conversation about depression. By the end of it, she's laughing and crying at the same time. You will be too.

5 / LOUIE

FX

Critics often laud Louis C.K. as an experimentalist who breaks the rules of the half-hour comedy. But this season he proved that he's just as visionary when he skews more traditional, whether writing a multi-episode story arc or going broad with an ep about weight. "So Did the Fat Lady" not only skewered our preoccupation with body image, it also pointed out that C.K. is a chubby guy who's still viewed as sexy. Dissecting his own privilege has become his forte. "None of you guys are special or magical," a friend tells him. "Some of you are luckier, and some of you work harder than others." Maybe that's why C.K. is so popular: The higher he ranks on lists like this, the more eager he is to examine how he got there.

BEST HIGH-CONCEPT SERIES
Showtime's *The Affair* is one to remember.

WORST HIGH-CONCEPT SERIES
You don't have to go home, *Mixology*, but you can't stay here.

BEST MILITARY-THEMED SERIES FEATURING A *VERONICA MARS* ALUM THAT ENDED TOO SOON
Enlisted. (RIP!)

WORST SERIES FINALE
Wait—so Sookie doesn't end up with Alcide, Bill, *or* Eric on *True Blood*?

WORST-ER SERIES FINALE
So we finally met the Mother...just in time for her to die?

6 / INSIDE AMY SCHUMER

COMEDY CENTRAL

"Humor is what happens when we're told the truth quicker and more directly than we're used to." George Saunders wrote that, but Schumer lived it this season. Her sketch about how tough it is to prosecute a military rape in a videogame (and, by implication, in real life) hit home so hard it hurt. Vignettes about women who enable one another's binge eating and the male fantasy of "A Chick Who Can Hang" were spot-on. Even a sketch about a cartoon meerkat made an impact: In that bit, Comedy Central allowed the uncensored use of a slang term for "vagina." Whether or not you think that's a win for feminism, it's definitely a victory for comedy.

7 / MAD MEN

AMC

As one Tricky Dick begins his reign, another one starts over. The first half of *Mad Men*'s final season defied our worst assumptions of pop culture's representation of rank masculinity

FARGO: CHRIS LARGE/FX; *PLEASE LIKE ME*: BEN TIMONY/PIVOT; *THE AFFAIR*: SHOWTIME; *ENLISTED*: JORDIN ALTHAUS/FOX; *HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER*: RON P. JAFFE/CBS; *INSIDE AMY SCHUMER*: MATTHEW PEYTON/COMEDY CENTRAL

and die inside you if that's what's required." —CLAIRE (ROBIN WRIGHT), *HOUSE OF CARDS*

to riveting effect, as Don (Jon Hamm) fought through his shame and resentment to reconstruct a better man: daring to be real with his daughter, helping former secretary/now boss Peggy (Elisabeth Moss) flourish. Tempering the optimism were omens of obsolescence and one heartbreaking death that left Don staggered all over again, and us wondering anew where his up-in-the-air life will land. The impending answer will bring to a close one of TV's greatest dramas—and an era.

8 / GAME OF THRONES

HBO

After four seasons of hero-decapitating, wedding-massacring, small-boy-defenestrating suspense, you'd think *Game of Thrones* couldn't shock us anymore. But with Joffrey's poisoning, the Red Viper's eye-gouging, and Tywin's death atop the, uh, "throne," there were more opportunities than ever to yell "WHAT?!" at the TV. What's surprising, then, is that the most talked-about scenes weren't the out-of-nowhere deaths, but the scenes that made us care fiercely about the living. Cersei's rape might've been a showrunner blunder, but it inspired more thoughtful debates about consent than you'll find on most college campuses. And Tyrion's courtroom lampooning of the hypocrites in the Red Keep was deeply satisfying. He wasn't just defending himself—he was speaking for all of us.

9 / THE GOOD WIFE

CBS

The Good Wife continued its resurgence, tracking Florrick/Agos' rebellion and spinning clashes with Lockhart/Gardner into complex, cheer-for-all-sides warfare, while Will's (Josh Charles) death yielded examinations of grief that avoided clichés and assuagements. This season's been telling a slow-burn story about the cost of relativism and limits of progressivism: Cary (Matt Czuchry) facing the consequences of representing a drug lord; Florrick/Agos diversifying; and Alicia (Julianna Margulies) venturing into politics without getting her soul dirty. Emmy, please watch closely.

10 / HANNIBAL

NBC

This engrossing transmutation of Lecter pulp into TV serial dared to depict pop cult's loony romance with evil as a literal doomed one. Hugh Dancy's Will tried to beat Mads Mikkelsen's cannibal at his own game—and wound up gutted by his adversary. Along the twisted path, the show explored themes of transcendence and transgression in intimacy, religion, art, and dining. The audacity of the subject matter was matched by the inventiveness of its presentation. *Hannibal* is like the roasted bird Will and Lecter swallowed during their last supper, "a rare but debauched delicacy."

AND THE RUNNERS-UP...

DOLL & EM This comedy about an actress (Emily Mortimer) who hires her oldest friend (Dolly Wells) as her assistant was the best depiction of the dark, competitive, mutually undermining underbelly of female friendship on TV. —MELISSA MAERZ

JANE THE VIRGIN It is important for you to know...that *Jane the Virgin* is *muy bien*. Its virtues are as paradoxical as its pregnant-virgin premise: funny and full of feeling, wickedly ironic and wonderfully sincere. Gina Rodriguez is the season's best breakout. —JEFF JENSEN

BREAKOUT

BILLY EICHNER

••• Billy Eichner has been kicking and screaming around Hollywood for a little while, but this year he turned up the volume: The 36-year-old comedian popped up everywhere with those high-decibel entertainment opinions he unleashes on Manhattan passersby on his Fuse show, *Billy on the Street*. He shined in an Emmy segment that included him drumming up donations for the *Big Bang Theory* cast. He scored laughs as high-strung Craig on *Parks and Recreation*. And he unleashed fresh *Street* absurdity, running around with Amy Poehler in a Pitbull mask and sledgehammering a station wagon with Lindsay Lohan while cameras rolled for her docuseries on Oprah's OWN. "When I saw *The Color Purple* when I was a kid, I would never have imagined that I would end up on Sofia's network, destroying a car with Lindsay Lohan," says Eichner. "It really all came full circle." —DAN SNIERSON

GAME OF THRONES: HELEN SLOAN/HBO; *THE GOOD WIFE*: DAVID GIESBRECHT/CBS; *DOLL & EM*: MISCHA RICHTER/HBO; *JANE THE VIRGIN*: JSQUARED/THE CW; EICHNER: ERIN PATRICE O'BRIEN/FUSE

▶ *SOUND BITE* “They have a bathroom here, or do they put their turds up in the cloud?” —SELINA (JULIA LOUIS-DREYFUS), *VEEP*

True Detective

And then there was the show our critics couldn’t agree on. Here, they make the case for why it was a best/worst of the year.

LOVE IT

Murdered girl with secrets. Serial killer as enlightened madman. Bickering, troubled, odd-couple cops. Sick of this story? Sick of the necroporn imagery, reductive female representation, and great white male redeemers that it often brings? Me too. But I’ll never weary of TV as novel in form and format as *True Detective*, the high-strange, intricately constructed detective yarn worthy of instant-classic status for the elevated performances of its stars, Matthew McConaughey and Woody Harrelson, and storytellers, writer Nic Pizzolatto and director Cary Joji Fukunaga. The characters haunt me. Rust Cohle and Marty Hart presented as same-old antiheroes, but exited as welcome rebukes to pulp pop’s nihilistic philosophies and retrograde masculinity. Although I see the flaws, I can’t deny it mesmerized me. May this messy masterpiece inspire more, and better. —JEFF JENSEN

LOATHE IT

The only thing worse than a terrible show is a promising one with a terrible ending. Why did I waste two months soldiering through this brilliantly acted, exquisitely directed mystery, only to discover that its “clues” added up to nothing beyond coincidences and red herrings? Yes, great art leaves things open to interpretation, but after too many characters and story lines were introduced and immediately abandoned, it seemed Pizzolatto didn’t have any answers himself. *True Detective* offered all the signifiers of gravitas—the dark lighting, the dead children, the easily Wiki-ed cultural references—without the profundity. And that treacly, lightness-wins-against-darkness ending? We’re supposed to believe that Rust—who, just moments before, seemed ready to die—has resolved a lifetime’s worth of guilt and grief in an instant because…he had a vision? C’mon. I’m all for fighting the darkness. But with lightness this forced, no one wins. —MELISSA MAERZ

BREAKOUT

ALLISON TOLMAN

••• Allison Tolman beat out hundreds of actresses for the role of Deputy Molly Solverson on FX’s chilly anthology series *Fargo*, charming both audiences and critics with her performance as a quietly relentless cop investigating a small-town murder. And she did so while holding her own opposite vets such as Billy Bob Thornton and Martin Freeman *and* earning her first Emmy nomination. “It’s a really long way to come in a year,” Tolman says. “It’s just insane and unfathomable.” She’s since guest-starred on *The Mindy Project* and landed a spot on Comedy Central’s mockumentary *Review*. So what are the chances she’ll land a permanent TV home soon? “I’m not rushing into looking for a starring vehicle because I feel like that’s a trap right now,” the 33-year-old says. “It’s easy to sign on for the wrong thing, to get desperate and scared.” There is one gig she’d jump at, however: roaming the mean streets of Bemidji in a future season of *Fargo*. Can we get a *you betcha*? —NATALIE ABRAMS

TRUE DETECTIVE: MICHELE K. SHORT/HBO; TOLMAN: CHRIS LARGE/FX

SOUND BITE • "Just look at the flowers, Lizzie. Just look at the flowers." —CAROL (MELISSA MCBRIDE), *THE WALKING DEAD*

BREAKOUT

CAITRIONA BALFE

• • • An ex-fashion model and a relative unknown before landing the starring role of *Outlander*'s time-traveling WWII combat nurse Claire Randall, Balfe appears in nearly every scene of the Starz drama based on Diana Gabaldon's best-selling novels, holding court among a clan of 18th-century Scottish warriors. Fan reaction has been so positive that admirers have sent the 35-year-old Balfe-branded tartans and whiskey—though the fantasy has proved a bit too real for some. "I was in Scotland at a restaurant and a lady sort of grabbed me and said, 'What are you doing here?!'" she recalls. Balfe will go back to the past soon enough when *Outlander* returns in April. "The second half of the season really ramps up; the action is a lot stronger. It's going to be heartbreaking and exciting," Balfe promises. We trust you, Sassenach. —JAMES HIBBERD

THE WORST SHOWS OF THE YEAR

BY JEFF JENSEN AND MELISSA MAERZ

(Clockwise from top left) *The Mysteries of Laura*, *Constantine*, *Mulaney*, *I Wanna Marry Harry*, and *Utopia*

1 / THE MYSTERIES OF LAURA NBC
From Dylan McDermott on *Stalker* to Kate Walsh on *Bad Judge*, this fall has been a rich one for Returning Favorites on New Star Vehicles That Suck. But *Laura* has been especially sucktastic, trapping Debra Messing, one of our most appealing and versatile actors, on a wonky dramedy that squanders, not showcases, her talent.

2 / UTOPIA FOX
For network TV, it was a pretty utopian idea: 15 people would spend a year creating an agrarian society to "find out what they can learn about life, love, and happiness." What they learned was that even the most lofty premise can't stop reality TV from devolving into the loudest, drunkest, most stereotype-reinforcing garbage since season 15 of *Big Brother*.

3 / CONSTANTINE NBC
It's easy to demonize comic-book adaptations because there are just so many of them. But we're bagging on *Constantine* because it's just bad—a poor fusion of antihero glum and the demon-catcher genre of supernatural series, of which we also need fewer.

4 / MULANEY FOX
John Mulaney may be a talented scribe and stand-up, but a sitcom star with a compelling vision he's not. His stab at a new-century *Seinfeld* was stunningly not funny despite his affable (if stiff) presence and a game (yet wasted) cast. There still might be a winning sitcom in him, but he'll have to become a bolder, more seasoned performer first.

5 / I WANNA MARRY HARRY FOX
The English already suspect that Americans can't tell the difference between an actual member of the royal family and some Tetley's-drunk ginger who might say, "'Allo, guv'nah!" with a put-on accent. This competition for the heart of the fake prince basically proved them right. Next time, ladies, just Google him.

BALFE: ED MILLER/STARZ; *THE MYSTERIES OF LAURA*: WILL HART/NBC; *UTOPIA*: CHRISTOPHER FRAGAPANE/FOX; *CONSTANTINE*: QUANTRELL COLBERT/NBC; *MULANEY*: JOHN P. FLEENOR/FOX; *I WANNA MARRY HARRY*: DANIEL SMITH/FOX

ABBI AND ILANA

• • • Abbi and Ilana, the razor-tongued heroines of Comedy Central's *Broad City*, would probably say they made 2014 their bitch, but the real women behind the outrageous caricatures are far more humble. "In the overall scheme of things, our story is very lucky," says Abbi Jacobson, 30, who co-created and stars on the series with Ilana Glazer, 26, who adds, "It's unbelievable that people spend a half hour a week with us, and the fact that [our show] means s--- to people, it's an honor." With season 2 of the Amy Poehler-produced series coming Jan. 14, the girls are ready for more—and might even parlay their newfound recognition. "Call the *Law & Order* people and tell them we want in," jokes Glazer. "We're Siamese twins." Jacobson agrees: "Wardrobe just needs to get us one sweater."
—MARC SNETIKER

PETER YANG/AUGUST IMAGES

of desserts. Be ice cream or be nothing. Zero stars." —RON (NICK OFFERMAN), *PARKS AND RECREATION*

Murderers' Row

These mugs were the answers to some of the year's biggest whodunits. (Duh, spoiler alert!) —KAT WARD

6'6"
6'6"
6'0"
6'0"
5'6"
5'6"
5'0"
5'0"
3'0"
0"

ERROL CHILDRESS
(GLENN FLESHLER)
TRUE DETECTIVE

VICTIMS Dora Lange and numerous other women throughout Louisiana, who went missing or were found dead, often with cultish imagery.

METHOD Tortured and stabbed

WES GIBBINS
(ALFRED ENOCH)
HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER

VICTIM Law professor Annalise Keating's husband, who turned up dead in the first episode.

METHOD Bludgeoned in the living room, with the justice trophy

KYLE STANSBURY
(TYLER ROSS)
THE KILLING

VICTIMS The Stansbury family, found dead in their home with their amnesiac, blood-stained, still-breathing son.

METHOD Shot

MELISSA HASTINGS
(TORREY DeVITTO)
PRETTY LITTLE LIARS

VICTIM Bethany Young, wrongly identified as *PLL* bestie Alison DiLaurentis, who also went missing on the same night.

METHOD Buried alive

MEREDITH WALKER
(MAYA ESHET)
TEEN WOLF

VICTIMS The supernatural population of Beacon Hills, who were being picked off by assassins paid by "The Benefactor."

METHOD Targeted assassinations

ROWAN POPE
(JOE MORTON)
SCANDAL

VICTIMS Pope ordered the deaths of Jerry, the president's son, and Harrison Wright, who figured it out.

METHODS Infection with virulent strain of meningitis; shot

BEST PET PERFORMANCES

What do this year's best pet performers have in common? Hair—and lots of it. *House of Cards*' absurdly fluffy, scene-stealing **Cashew** looked more like a gremlin than a guinea pig. Ilana's doggy charge on *Broad City* had such a lustrous white-blond mane that her sometime boyfriend Lincoln renamed the pup **Judith Light**. But the crown must go to the pet who immediately became a meme: **Ser Pounce**, Tommen's cuddly cat on *Game of Thrones*. He made such a strong impression that fans nearly rioted when news broke that the feline would appear in just one episode—a twist of fate almost as shocking as the Purple Wedding. —HILLARY BUSIS

BEST TV TYKES
We wouldn't be able to give those adorable imps on *black-ish* a spanking either, Dre.

WORST TV TYKE
Small Wonder gave us a soft spot for robot kids, but *Extant* made us short-circuit. Here's hoping creepy Ethan—much like our vacation photos—gets lost in the cloud.

BEST OLYMPIC EVENT
Poking Fun at Bob Costas' Pinkeye. Gold medalist, broadcaster division: Matt "Taking the red-eye home?" Lauer

WORST OLYMPIC EVENT
Subtitle Hide-and-Seek. Gold medalist, viewer division: Rosetta Stone Russian-edition owners

BEST COUPLE WHO BEAT THE *MOONLIGHTING* ODDS
Mindy <3s Danny

BLACK-ISH: JOHN FLEENOR/ABC; *THE MINDY PROJECT*: ISABELLA VOSMIKOVA/FOX; *TRUE DETECTIVE*: LACEY TERRELL/HBO; *HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER*: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC; *THE KILLING*: CAROLE SEGAL/NETFLIX; *PRETTY LITTLE LIARS*: ADAM TAYLOR/ABC FAMILY; *TEEN WOLF*: MTV; *SCANDAL*: KELSEY MCNEAL/ABC; *GAME OF THRONES*: HELEN SLOAN/HBO

▶ *SOUND BITE* • "Another thing that I just don't do anymore

THE BEST EPISODES

1

TRUE DETECTIVE

"THE SECRET FATE OF ALL LIFE"

NO, THIS ISN'T THE ONE WITH THE tracking shot. This is the awesome one that came after, a showcase for the HBO psychodrama's many virtues. The terrifying war-flick staging of the assault on Reggie Ledoux's shack-of-horrors backwoods compound was masterful. The collaborative dual narration was never more intricate. And then there was quantum nihilist Rust Cohle's signature "Time is a flat circle" soliloquy. "The Secret Fate of All Life" was *True Detective* at its most well-rounded. —JEFF JENSEN

2 / **FARGO**

"THE CROCODILE'S DILEMMA"

It didn't take long for the FX adaptation to find its own homespun voice. Happened in the first episode—right from the man-in-under-pants-pops-out-of-trunk start. And when the mysterious hitman (Billy Bob Thornton) calmly invoked dragons to scare away the cop (Colin Hanks), we were chilled *and* thrilled. —DAN SNIERSON

3 / **GAME OF THRONES**

"THE LION AND THE ROSE"

Joffrey's demise was shocking in both setting (*another* wedding?) and execution (you *almost* felt sorry for the gagging psychopath). But it was the despot's last moments of bullying behavior and a sequence of unexpected character pairings (Brienne and Cersei! Jaime and Loras!) that made this ep reign. —JAMES HIBBERD

4 / **SHERLOCK**

"THE SIGN OF THREE"

Only *Sherlock* could shift from detective thriller to rom-com to deliver one of its strongest outings. Sherlock giving a rambling, beautiful speech at John's wedding encapsulated why this version of Holmes is unique—and why Benedict Cumberbatch is a star. —JAMES HIBBERD

5 / **HOMELAND**

"THERE'S SOMETHING ELSE GOING ON"

New characters and locales have let Carrie get back to what she does

TRUE DETECTIVE: MICHELE K. SHORT/HBO; *HOMELAND*: DAVID BLOOMER/SHOWTIME

is wax. Sooo it's 1976 down there." —MELLIE (BELLAMY YOUNG), *SCANDAL*

↑ Kate Mulgrew and Selenis Leyva on *Orange Is the New Black*

best: hunting Big Bads. Yet it was her most human moment—trying to save her mentor—that brought this hour to its knees. It was classic *Homeland*—and we mean that, once again, in a good way. —MEETA AGRAWAL

6 / TRANSPARENT

"BEST NEW GIRL"

Creator Jill Soloway says there are no good or bad guys on *Transparent*. Which is what makes the series so gripping and this ep revelatory. With flashbacks to Maura's first trans conference, Josh's babysitter trauma, and Shelly's bad marriage, it was a rare moment of empathy for everyone. —MELISSA MAERZ

7 / SILICON VALLEY

"OPTIMAL TIP-TO-TIP EFFICIENCY"

Forget Stephen Hawking: The Pied Piper boys figured out the theory of everything penile. The finale turned a goofy masturbation gag into the season's dramatic climax. It's hard to explain more here, not only because they used real math equations but also because it was just a bunch of dick jokes. So let's just give them a hand for pulling it off. —RAY RAHMAN

8 / THE GOOD WIFE

"ALL TAPPED OUT"

The NSA wiretapping of the various Lockhart/Florrick/Gardner/Agos permutations finally came to light—and Alicia worked the wire to her benefit, ensnaring her would-be ensnarers. Yet, through all the high-tech high jinks, the lingering grief over Will grounded this episode in a reality few shows can tap into. —MEETA AGRAWAL

9 / HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER

"LET'S GET TO SCOOPING"

For a show that revels in plot twists and lascivious behavior, the most exhilarating moment so far has been a dialogue-free scene in which Viola Davis' Annalise removed her wig and makeup to confront her philandering husband. It both elevated the series and changed the face of TV. —TIM STACK

10 / ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK

"IT WAS THE CHANGE"

When a storm short-circuited Litchfield, we were reminded of what these often sympathetic inmates are capable of: murder, betrayal, getting high on nutmeg. As Red and Vee went to war, it also made us wonder: If we're rooting for them to do evil, what does that say about us? —MELISSA MAERZ

FALLON'S PICKS

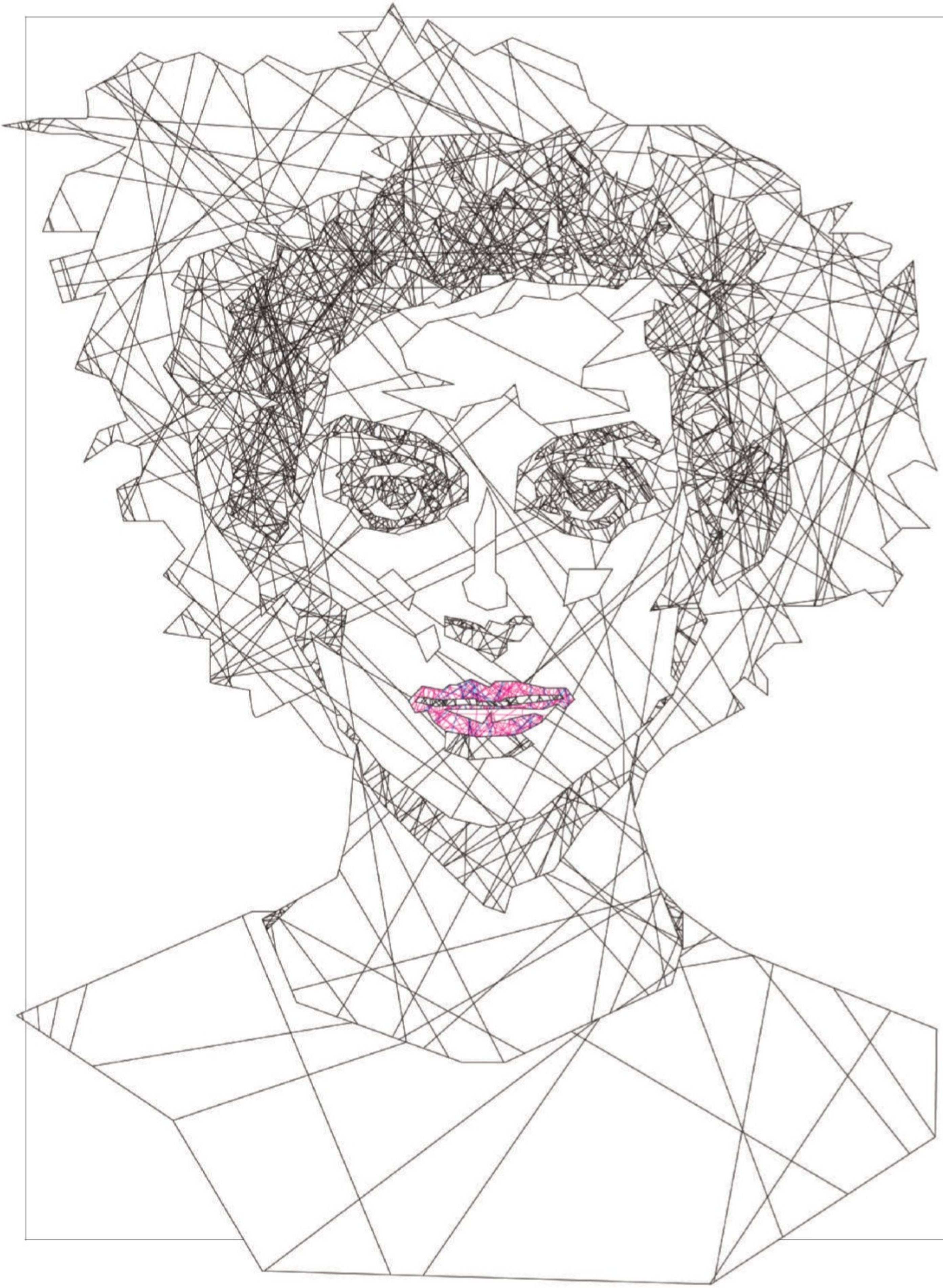
"**Knife Fight**—I love that show. It's on Esquire Network. If you like *Top Chef*, it's just a half hour. These two chefs go at it in, like, this basement. The winner wins a big knife, and the loser wins a tiny knife. [*Laughs*] That's it! It's kind of rad. It gets to the point—you're in, you're out."

BREAKOUT

JACK FALAHEE

••• Network TV has never been hotter, thanks in part to the 25-year-old Falahee, who gets down and dirty in the kinds of scenes you'd expect to find on HBO—not ABC's newest drama. But it's all in a day's work for the actor, who studied theater in New York before earning the role of slick, snaky law student Connor Walsh on *How to Get Away With Murder*. "I did have a backup plan—I also went to business school—but to land on a show that's been such a huge success and so quickly changed everything, it feels almost fantastical," he says. With his newfound recognition, Falahee is still easing into life at the epicenter of fall's runaway hit. "All the chatter surrounding the show, hearing about numbers...I chuckle, but I've really gotten into meditation." And to think, Connor hasn't even killed anyone...yet. —MARC SNETIKER

ORANGE IS THE NEW BLACK: JOJO WHILDEN/NETFLIX; FALLON: PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER; FALAHEE: MITCHELL HAASETH/ABC



THE YEAR'S *BEST* ALBUMS

BY EW STAFF

Music

1/

ST. VINCENT

ST. VINCENT

MUSIC HAS ALWAYS HAD its share of self-styled weirdos and willful eccentrics—how can we forget when they won't stop reminding us how unique they are? But actual space oddities, like comets, don't enter our orbit nearly as often. Though St. Vincent was born in the most ordinary place (Tulsa, Okla.) under the most ordinary name (Annie Clark), someone should cross-check her DNA; there's real Zappa freakiness and Ziggy Stardust glitter in that bloodline. The songs here stomp and slither and squiggle like electrified molecules under a mad studio scientist's microscope. Which isn't to say that *St. Vincent* isn't pretty. In fact, it's gorgeous: a wild gyre of beautifully crystallized ballads ("Prince Johnny," "I Prefer Your Love"), galloping synth rave-ups ("Rattlesnake," "Regret"), and full-on art-funk frenzies ("Huey Newton," "Birth in Reverse"). "I want all of your mind, Give me all of it," she demands on the sly social-media indictment "Digital Witness." Let her have it. —LEAH GREENBLATT

←
ILLUSTRATION BY
LEON DIJKSTRA

2/ **RUN THE JEWELS**

RUN THE JEWELS 2

Sometimes the sequel is better than the original. Underground producer El-P and firebrand MC Killer Mike's second outing as a duo is the perfect playlist for the last club on earth—where the only response to partisan gridlock and cable-news paranoia is to flail violently until it looks like dancing. El-P's glitchy beats match handsomely with Mike's revolutionary rhetoric but still leave room for the funny, filthy funk of "Love Again (Akinyele Back)." Though the pair initially gave *RTJ2* away, getting their empire-crumbling anthems for free still felt like grand theft. —KYLE ANDERSON

3/ **PERFUME GENIUS**

TOO BRIGHT

Sexuality is a pop star's Swiss Army knife: all-purpose but too often a blunt instrument. Rarely does an artist wield it with as

▶ *MEMORABLE LYRIC* • "I'm a princess cut from marble, smoother

THE ALBUM EVERYBODY WANTED FOR FREE AND COULDN'T HAVE
Taylor Swift, *1989* on Spotify

THE ALBUM NOBODY WANTED FOR FREE BUT GOT ANYWAY
U2, *Songs of Innocence* on iTunes

MOST COMMITTED PERFORMANCE BY ANDRE 3000
In the title role of Jimi Hendrix in *Jimi: All Is by My Side*

LEAST COMMITTED PERFORMANCE BY ANDRE 3000
With a reunited OutKast at Coachella

LEAST SENSICAL RHETORICAL QUESTION PT. 1
Nico & Vinz's "Am I Wrong"

LEAST SENSICAL RHETORICAL QUESTION PT. 2
DJ Snake and Lil Jon's "Turn Down for What"

↑ Lana Del Rey

much wit, pathos, and utter fearlessness as the chamber-pop iconoclast born Mike Hadreas. In his hands, the line "No family is safe/When I sashay" becomes both a mission statement and a brilliant refraction of the personal and political. Hadreas' reedy quaver and fragile melodies mask the tensile strength beneath; *Too Bright* is soul music in the best, most literal sense. —LEAH GREENBLATT

4 / LANA DEL REY

ULTRAVIOLENCE

It was one of the most ironic turnarounds of the year. A pop diva with a penchant for rap music who was attacked for her supposed lack of realness on all sides made the most compelling argument for the continued relevancy of blues-based guitar rock—a genre currently suffocating on its addiction to authenticity. *Ultraviolence* has roots deep in musical traditions older than television, but Del Rey's dazed and dreamy presence on songs like "Brooklyn Baby" and "Pretty When You Cry" lets the album float out of time. —MILES RAYMER

5 / MAC DEMARCO

SALAD DAYS

Beneath the messy hair and baggy flannels, Mac DeMarco may be indie rock's greatest existentialist. On his third album's thematic center, "Passing Out Pieces," the Canadian native questions whether his life is a "hell of a story/Or is it boring?" It's true that not much happens in *Salad*'s 34 minutes, but the album's slack-rock melodies and shimmering solos make twentysomething ennui sound positively hypnotic. When he sings "Half of my life, I've been an addict" on "Let My Baby Stay," he's not talking about nicotine. Get used to that smoky haze; this guy isn't going anywhere. —ERIC RENNER BROWN

↑ Beck

6 / FLYING LOTUS

YOU'RE DEAD!

Until now, the L.A. producer's gifts to the world have consisted of exquisitely intricate assemblages of blunted Cali hip-hop, '70s jazz-funk, and arcane dance music. On his fifth album, he exploded his own formula—and listeners' heads—by splicing together frenetic free jazz, the more cosmically sloppy portions of the Funkadelic catalog, and an imaginary anime adaptation of the Tibetan Book of the Dead into one sprawling psychedelic masterwork. —MILES RAYMER

7 / TY SEGALL

MANIPULATOR

Ty Segall makes songs the way other people make sandwiches; at 27, the compulsively productive Californian has a catalog deeper than most grizzled lifers. And quantity has bred quality on *Manipulator*, his supremely self-assured collection of shambling psych anthems. The garage-rock scrapper's still in there, he's just got hooks big enough for stadiums now. —LEAH GREENBLATT

8 / BECK

MORNING PHASE

"Say Goodbye." "Turn Away." "Unforgiven." *Morning* is a mood record if there ever was one, but it's also Beck's best work in years. After dips into cheeky rock and winky avant-garde (yes, his previous "album" was a book of sheet music), his latest finds the wild-card artist returning to the vulnerable, velvety folk of 2002's *Sea Change*. Each song swims by with gorgeous melancholy, as though he'd found the only acoustic guitar on the moon. "The ocean's a diamond/That only shines when you're alone," he laments on "Morning." Nobody better tell him about Cymbalta. —RAY RAHMAN

ANDRE 3000: GABRIEL OLSEN/FILMMAGIC.COM; DEL RAY: NEIL KRUG; BECK: PETER HAPAK

9 / **FKA TWIGS**

LP1

There's nary a proper "single" on the U.K. electro phenom's full-length debut—no club-ready hits or rapper guest spots. Moreover, the dancer-turned-chanteuse has cultivated an eerie art-school persona that seems designed to bewilder moms everywhere. But her mixture of foreboding, lust, and longing has managed a feat most prefab pop stars can only dream of: It expresses a unique point of view. Whether she's tempting a potential lover away from his lady ("Give me two weeks/You won't recognize her") or sampling a car alarm, she holds listeners in her narcotic grip. —MOLLY SIMMS

10 / **ERIC CHURCH**

THE OUTSIDERS

Four albums in, Church continues to carry the torch for outlaw country. The rowdy title track leaves nothing but scorched earth in its wake, but he's no one-note badass. *Outsiders* proves Church is a tender storyteller, too, with an ear for experimental production. "Dark Side" and "A Man Who Was Gonna Die Young" wring poignant introspection out of his acoustic guitar, and wistful centerpiece "Talladega" hums with so much genuine emotion, it'll make even the most resolute Yankee pine for the South. —MADISON VAIN

BREAKOUTS

IGGY AZALEA

••• Though it seemed like Azalea's "Fancy" came out of nowhere, it was actually the long-awaited break that followed nearly two years of false starts. But she didn't let label issues and a few poorly received singles crush her faith in future success. "I've just always felt like whatever I was doing was set in stone. People say I'm a lucky person, and I think I am," the 24-year-old Aussie told EW in March, before she dominated the summer with "Fancy" and her unforgettable verse on the Ariana Grande smash "Problem." "I always think, 'This is going to happen. I'm getting an elephant.'" She didn't acquire a pachyderm in 2014—but she'd have a hard time finding space in her house for one anyway, what with 11 platinum sales plaques (for "Fancy," "Problem," "Work," and "Black Widow"), a pair of American Music Awards, an MTV Moonman, and a seemingly endless supply of hot pants. —KYLE ANDERSON

JACK ANTONOFF

••• We all saw the world through his thick black glasses this year. Antonoff, 30, paused his guitar duties in fun. to debut his chart-topping side project Bleachers; penned songs with Taylor Swift, including the pop steamroller "Out of the Woods"; and still found the time to support his *Girls*-friend Lena Dunham. "It was a really intense year," he admits. "I don't think I've ever worked this hard, and I don't think I've ever been as happy." —MOLLY SIMMS

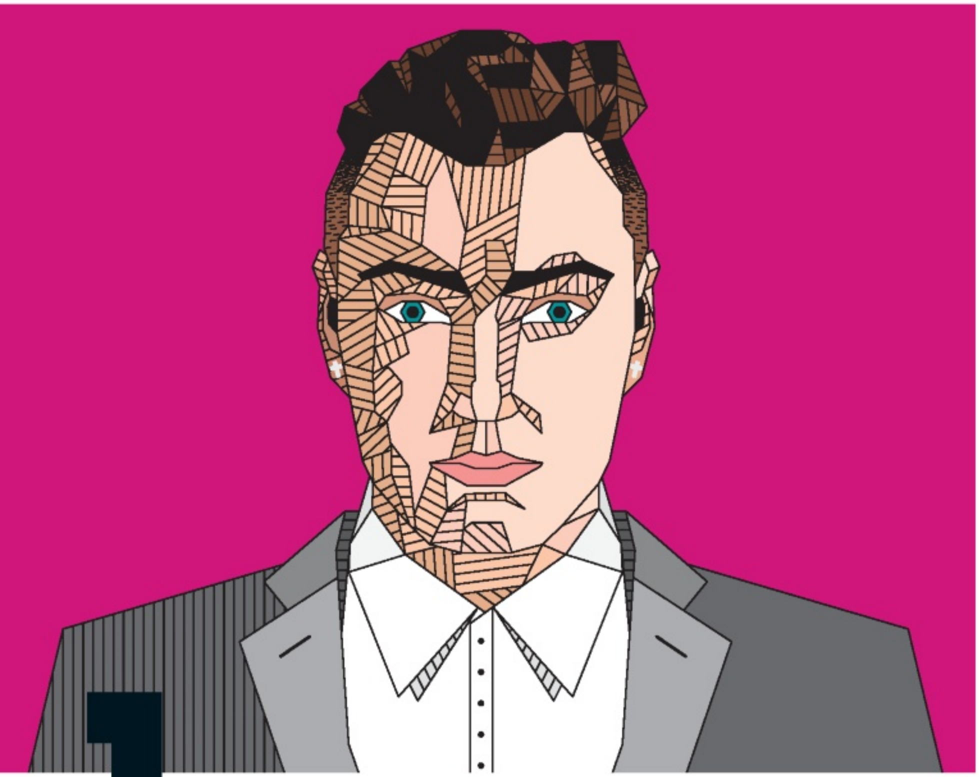
DJ MUSTARD

••• The motivation behind the L.A. producer's signature combination of jittery house music and bum-rush hip-hop swagger? Radio wasn't playing the stuff he liked. "I wasn't hearing the 90 BPMs," Mustard says. "The faster music." Now he's all over the dial: This year alone, the 24-year-old born—seriously—Dijon McFarlane laid down chart-crashing tracks for Wiz Khalifa, T.I., YG, and Big Sean. —KYLE ANDERSON

TWIGS: DOMINIC SHELDON; AZALEA: COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL MUSIC; ANTONOFF: PHOTOGRAPH BY ALEX WELSH; MUSTARD: AXEL DUPEUX

▶ *MEMORABLE LYRIC* • "Because you know I'm all about that bass/'Bout that bass, no treble/I'm

THE BEST SINGLES



1

SAM SMITH

"STAY WITH ME"

LIKE SO MANY GREAT LOVE SONGS, "STAY With Me" isn't really about love. It's about the hopeful, lonely rift between two people—in this case, a one-night stand that leaves Smith pleading, "I don't want you to leave/Will you hold my hand?" Then waves of blue-eyed soul lift the song to the most rapturous gospel-choir climax ever heard outside a Sunday service. About that: There is no choir. It's a one-man multitude—a single voice raised to the power of a chorus. It's one guy figuring out, at least for now, how to be whole all by himself. —ADAM MARKOVITZ

↑ *ILLUSTRATION BY* **CORN STUDIO**

2/ BEYONCÉ FEAT. NICKI MINAJ

"FLAWLESS (REMIX)"

In a single swoop of rage, Queen Bey coins a slogan for 21st-century feminism ("I woke up like this"), delivers the final word on her biggest scandal ("Of course sometimes s--- go down/When it's a billion dollars on the elevator"), and even lets Minaj invite Ivanka Trump to the party. You could call it fearless, scary-smart, or unforgettable—but really, the title describes it best. —ADAM MARKOVITZ

3/ ARIANA GRANDE FEAT. IGGY AZALEA AND BIG SEAN

"PROBLEM"

The zippy soundtrack to a sci-fi comedy wherein sassy, consonant-challenged Detective Grande shakes off a string of bad lovers and teams up with the machete-tongued Sergeant Azalea to battle time-traveling robot gangsters. Their supernatural secret? The mysteriously transfixing power of producer Max Martin's spunky saxiness. —KYLE ANDERSON

4/ JACK WHITE

"LAZARETTO"

"My veins are blue and connected/And every single bone in my brain is electric," White sneers on this dense, manic, and fantastically indulgent display of musicality. The song's thick psych-funk bass line, face-melting electric guitar, and

↑ **Beyoncé**

BEYONCÉ: ROBIN HARPER

all about that bass/'Bout that bass, no treble/I'm all about that bass/'Bout that bass, no treble..." —MEGHAN TRAINOR, "ALL ABOUT THAT BASS"

cagey blues vocals further cement his position as rock & roll's primal keeper of the flame. —MADISON VAIN

5 / KENDRICK LAMAR

"i"

On the self-esteem-boosting jam, rap's next great hope rasps nimbly over the strains of the Isley Brothers' unbearably funky "That Lady." Kendrick's working through some issues here ("The world is a ghetto with big guns and picket signs"), but he barely breaks a sweat. When you've got personal-power sermons like these, who needs Tony Robbins? —MOLLY SIMMS

6 / TAYLOR SWIFT

"BLANK SPACE"

Taylor Swift knows we've been talking about her. So on *1989*'s syncopated highlight, she goes fully meta. With self-aware lines like "You look like my next mistake," the star proves her daggers always hit their targets—even if she has to nick herself along the way. —ISABELLA BIEDENHARN

FALLON'S PICKS

"**Spotify** was big for me this year. These are my start songs:

"Jump in the Line"
HARRY BELAFONTE

"Couldn't Get It Right"
CLIMAX BLUES BAND

"Black Eye"
LOVE INKS

"St. Thomas"
SONNY ROLLINS

"Just One More"
GEORGE JONES

↑ Taylor Swift

7 / THE WAR ON DRUGS

"RED EYES"

An indie-rock rival dismissed the Philly band as "beer-commercial lead-guitar s---," but his comment contained unintentional truth. "Red Eyes," with its drifting synths and liquid guitars, is a Springsteen-meets-Petty heartland anthem that conveys both aimlessness and limitless possibilities. Budweiser's ad team only wish they'd thought of it first. —ERIC RENNER BROWN

8 / HOZIER

"TAKE ME TO CHURCH"

It was the song that launched a thousand Shazam sessions. From LeBron's Beats ad to a heavy *Leftovers* scene, "Take Me to Church" was inescapable—but who was that guy? With a haunting melody and sublime string of "Amen"s, Irish singer-songwriter Andrew Hozier-Byrne converted even nonbelievers. —ISABELLA BIEDENHARN

9 / LYKKE LI

"NO REST FOR THE WICKED"

Sounding like a cross between a Brontë sister and a lost Phil Spector starlet, the Swedish songstress rues a love she ruined: "I had his heart, but I broke it every time." What begins as a mournful little piano tinkle breaks open into pure cinema, a girl-group beauty draped in widow black. —LEAH GREENBLATT

10 / SCHOOLBOY Q

"MAN OF THE YEAR"

Over ominous West Coast Cadillac bass, Q big-ups herbal refreshment and commands all well-endowed girls to bounce. It's base as hell—but as foolishness goes, it's exquisitely effective. —KYLE ANDERSON

5 BEST MUSIC VIDEOS

1 / IGGY AZALEA FEAT. CHARLI XCX, "FANCY"
A detail-obsessed ode to *Clueless*—that highway scene! Those knee socks!—that made everybody fall butt-crazy in love with Iggy.

2 / JENNY LEWIS, "JUST ONE OF THE GUYS"
By putting Anne Hathaway, Kristen Stewart, and Brie Larson in drag, Lewis made lady mustaches seem impossibly erotic.

3 / FUTURE ISLANDS, "SEASONS (WAITING ON YOU)"
Frontman Sam Herring exorcised his dance-rock demons on *Letterman* and blew everyone—especially Dave—away.

4 / SIA, "CHANDELIER"
Plenty of people paid homage (including Jim Carrey and Lena Dunham), but tiny leotarded pixie Maddie Ziegler outshone them all.

5 / CHET FAKER, "GOLD"
What lurks on a stretch of lost highway? The dreamiest roller-skate action since Olivia Newton-John laced up for *Xanadu*. —KYLE ANDERSON

SWIFT: SARAH BARLOW + STEPHEN SCHOFIEL; FALLON: PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER

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MUSIC VIDEO MOST LIKELY TO BE MISTAKEN FOR A FESTIVE GAP AD

Pharrell, "Marilyn Monroe"

MUSIC VIDEO MOST LIKELY TO BE MISTAKEN FOR FASCIST AGITPROP

Nicki Minaj, "Only"

BEST MADE-UP (OR IS IT??) SECRET AGENCY PER *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*

The Beygency: for citizens who dare to speak out against Queen Bey

BEST MADE-UP (OR IS IT??) MEDICATION PER *SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*

Swiftamine: the vertigo medication for adults traumatized by the discovery that they enjoy Tay's music

5 WORST ALBUMS, SONGS & VIDEOS

(Clockwise from top left) Wiz Khalifa, Future, Robin Thicke, and Neil Young

1 / THE CHAINSMOKERS, "#SELFIE"
Not to get hyperbolic, but between its dirt-stupid beats and vacant video (which has more than 260 million views), "#Selfie" is exhibit A for giving the entire Internet a Viking funeral and starting over again.

2 / FOSTER THE PEOPLE, *SUPERMODEL*
When "Pumped Up Kicks" broke huge in 2011, Foster the People were supposed to be the next Beach Boys. Turns out they were—as long as you prefer "Kokomo" to *Pet Sounds.*

3 / NEIL YOUNG, *STORYTONE*
Young is a fascinating icon who just split from his wife of 36 years and launched a wacky digital-music start-up. None of that intrigue is in *Storytone*, an orchestral experiment that is both epically dull and frustratingly irrelevant.

4 / ROBIN THICKE, *PAULA*
If Thicke's new album-naming rubric is "Things I'm never getting back," look for *Dignity* next.

5 / MIKE WILL MADE IT FEAT. WIZ KHALIFA AND FUTURE, "P---Y OVERRATED"
Future's "Move That Dope" was one of the neck-snappingest bangers of the year, but he flushed an infinity pool's worth of goodwill on this lazy, misogynistic tag-team with bong-water sponge Khalifa.
—KYLE ANDERSON

THICKE: MARK SULLIVAN/WIREIMAGE.COM; YOUNG: ANGELA WEISS/GETTY IMAGES; FUTURE: PARAS GRIFFIN/GETTY IMAGES; KHALIFA: SCOTT LEGATO/GETTY IMAGES

For fans of HBO's mega-hit *Game of Thrones*

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GEORGE R. R. MARTIN

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THE ICE DRAGON

THE INSTANT *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER

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while supplies last

"A MUST-BUY FOR ALL MARTIN FANS."
—SFREVU

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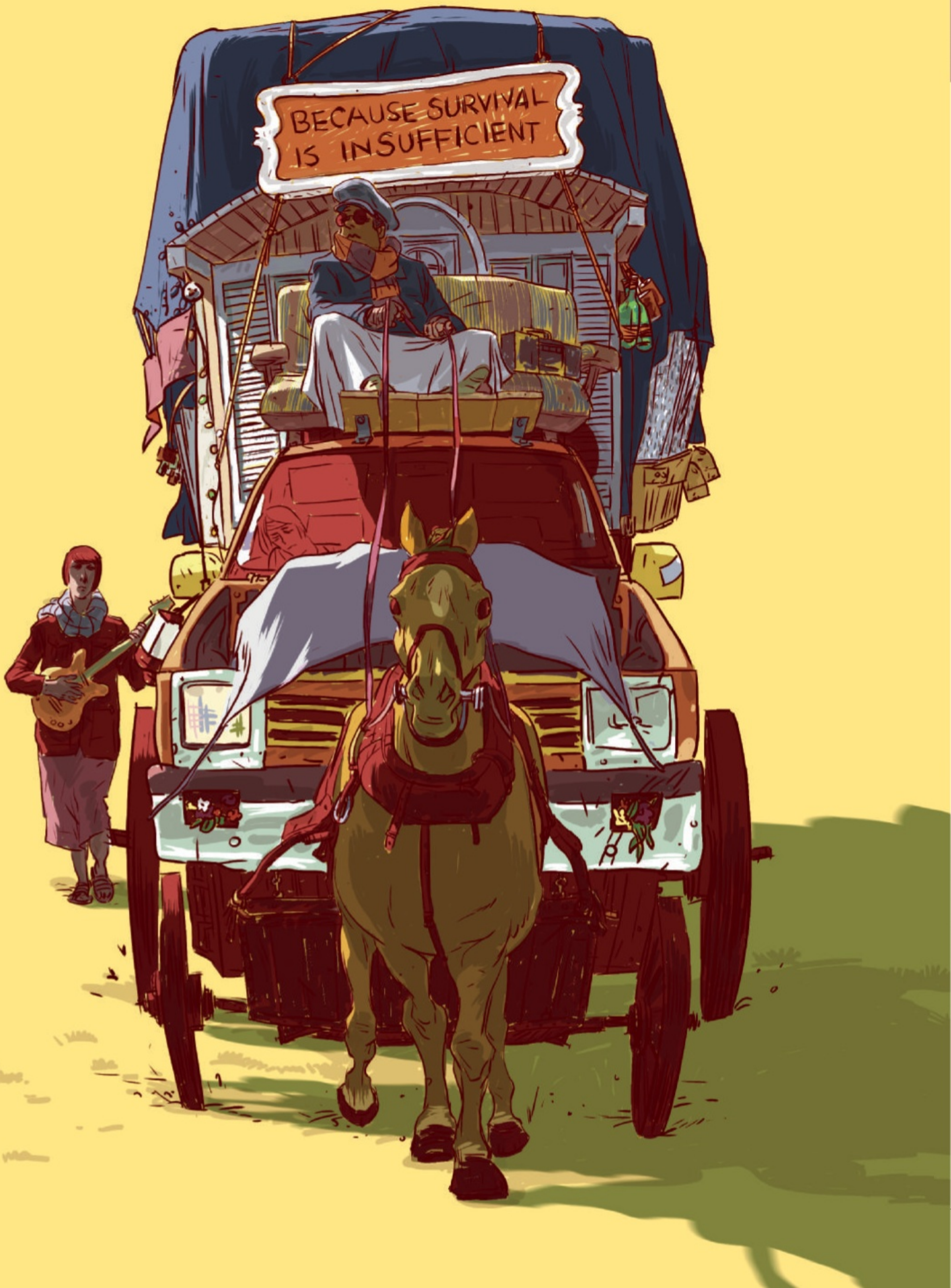
TOR TEEN


BECAUSE SURVIVAL IS INSUFFICIENT

THE YEAR'S *BEST* FICTION

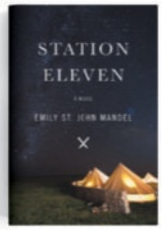
BY EW STAFF

Books

1

STATION ELEVEN

EMILY ST. JOHN MANDEL



FOR THOSE OF YOU suffering from dystopian fatigue, *Station Eleven* will renew your hope in the end of the world. To say it's not the typical postapocalyptic novel is an understatement—no zombies, no aliens, not even nuclear war. Instead, a virus called the Georgian flu dispatches 99 percent of humanity with elegant swiftness. Among the things that no longer exist: running water, swimming pools, planes, the Internet. Twenty years after the fall, we follow a constellation of survivors—members of the Traveling Symphony who stage Shakespearean plays in the desolate, scattered towns of North America, and a group that has made a home in an abandoned airport—to uncover the often surprising, sometimes sinister bonds that existed among these characters before the plague. And even though near extinction is never happy, *Station Eleven* never gets bogged down in bleakness. The fixtures of our modern world have turned out to be fleeting, and this radiant novel will still bowl you over with the beauty of it all. —STEPHAN LEE

←
ILLUSTRATION BY
FRANK STOCKTON

2 / **REDEPLOYMENT**

PHIL KLAY

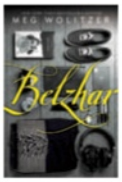
War has always been hell, and reams have been filled with the ugly poetry of battle. But in his unvarnished prose, Klay—an Iraq-war vet who just won a National Book Award for this collection—captures the voice of the contemporary American soldier, whiplashed by both combat and peace. "We shot dogs. Not by accident," a grunt says in one of 12 stories that not only put the reader's boots on the ground, metaphorically speaking, but put the sand in his teeth as well. —JEFF LABRECQUE

3 / **FOURTH OF JULY CREEK**

SMITH HENDERSON

The myth of rugged individualism crumbles like so much shale at the side of the body of water that gives Henderson's debut novel, *Fourth of July Creek*, its name. Pete Snow is a social worker in the early '80s trying to save a young boy living in the Montana wilderness with his deranged, and possibly

▶ **BEST FIRST LINE** • "She woke up late that morning, and knew: Something had followed them



BEST YA
Meg Wolitzer, author of *The Interestings*, made a winning entrée into YA with her captivating teen fantasy *Belzhar*.

HOTTEST (AND MOST CONTROVERSIAL) BOOK OF THE YEAR
With her first book, *Not That Kind of Girl*, Lena Dunham has reaped the same kinds of reactions she always gets: breathless praise, long-winded think pieces, and out-of-control Internet trolling.

MOST UNUSUAL BEST-SELLER
Twenty years after it was first published, *The Hot Zone*—Richard Preston's real-life horror story about the Ebola virus—rocketed back onto the charts.

dangerous, father, a self-styled doomsday prophet who is quick to bite helping hands. Henderson's saga of looking for salvation by way of saving others is lyrical, suspenseful, and heartbreaking. Not all can be rescued, but we can all be redeemed. —ANTHONY BREZNICAN

4 / THE PAYING GUESTS
SARAH WATERS

What starts off as a keen examination of class in the post-Edwardian years following World War I (think *Downton Abbey*, season 4) morphs into a steamy, forbidden lesbian love story. That is, until a violent incident transforms it into a thriller with an eye-opening glimpse at the antiquated British judicial system. Part courtroom drama, part sizzling romance, it's the sort of novel that will keep you up reading for three nights straight. (At least three nights—it's 564 pages long!) —STEPHAN LEE

5 / ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE
ANTHONY DOERR

Doerr braids together two parallel stories during World War II: One follows a blind French girl with a rich imaginary life, and the other describes a German orphan whose brilliant mind has brought him to the attention of the Nazis. Without glossing over the atrocities of war, Doerr has somehow managed to write the most hopeful novel of the year. —STEPHAN LEE

6 / THE BONE CLOCKS
DAVID MITCHELL

A young girl gets pulled into a centuries-long war between two factions of immortal beings. That premise may sound a bit YA for the author of *Cloud Atlas*, but Mitchell's latest is just as exquisitely constructed as any of his previous books, with a large cast of memorable characters (including a dissolute Eton type and a thinly veiled Martin Amis stand-in) and a plot that blossoms outward beautifully. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

7 / EVERYTHING I NEVER TOLD YOU
CELESTE NG

Other novels have begun with a teen girl dead in a lake. But in Ng's freakishly assured debut, the question of who killed Lydia Lee, the golden child in a biracial family in 1970s Ohio, is only one thread in a complex tapestry that keeps the pages turning as much with stunning psychological revelations as with the burning central mystery. —STEPHAN LEE

8 / WE ARE NOT OURSELVES
MATTHEW THOMAS

Ten years in the making, Thomas' epic debut traces three generations of Irish-Americans living in New York, all driven by the goal of doing better than their parents—and making sure their children do better than they have. It's a wrenching meditation on the limits of the American dream for immigrants and the working class during the 20th century. But it's also just a gripping family drama. Be prepared to ugly-cry at the end. —MELISSA MAERZ

9 / EUPHORIA
LILY KING

How could such a brief novel based on such a seemingly uncool topic—Margaret Mead in the field in New Guinea in the 1930s—pack such a walloping, sensuous punch? King has so engagingly brought to life Mead (in the fictionalized form of Nell Stone), her work, and the men fighting for her affection that she's going to make cultural-anthropology nerds of us all. —STEPHAN LEE

5 WORST BOOKS /

1 / DELICIOUS!
RUTH REICHL
Reichl—a fabulous food writer and memoirist—made a regrettable foray into fiction.

2 / THE TRIPLE PACKAGE
AMY CHUA & JED RUBENFELD
Remember the Tiger Mom? She and her husband penned this racial-superiority screed.

3 / THE TRUTH ABOUT THE HARRY QUEBERT AFFAIR
JOËL DICKER
This trope-filled European megahit—about a hotshot American novelist, his mentor, and a long-ago murder—fell flat in its U.S. debut.

4 / COSBY: HIS LIFE AND TIMES
MARK WHITAKER
These 544 pages on the fallen star skate past the sexual-assault allegations leveled against him.

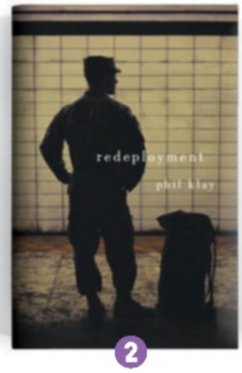
5 / TRUE LOVE
JENNIFER LOPEZ
Lopez says she's the "true love" of the title—she's finally learned to respect herself. This is the definition of *air sandwich*!

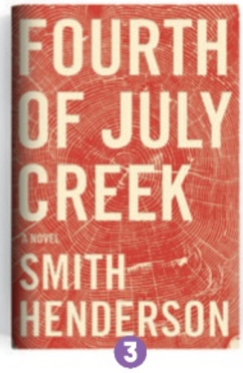
home from Russia." —LAURA KASISCHKE, *MIND OF WINTER*

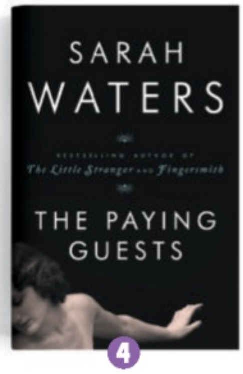
10 / THE SOUTHERN REACH TRILOGY

JEFF VANDERMEER

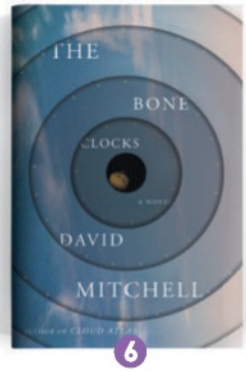
Over the course of three compulsively readable and nontraditional sci-fi novels—*Annihilation*, *Authority*, and *Acceptance*—VanderMeer's Southern Reach trilogy confronts the sinister, rapidly expanding landmass known only as Area X. The first book trails a team of women chosen (sacrificed?) for an exploration of X. The second investigates the aftermath of the expedition from the halls of a broken, festering government. And the third? It ties everything together, forming the crux of VanderMeer's deeply unsettling philosophical argument. —MADISON VAIN


redeployment
phil klay
2

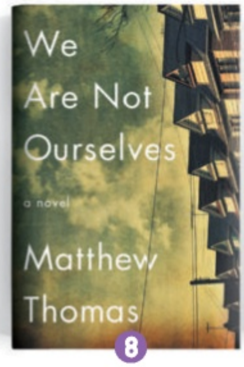

FOURTH OF JULY CREEK
A NOVEL
SMITH HENDERSON
3

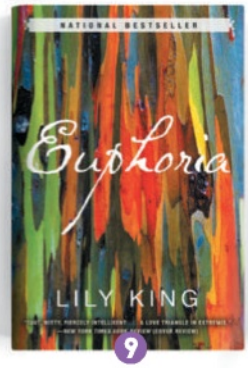

SARAH WATERS
The Little Stranger and Fingersmith
THE PAYING GUESTS
4

ALL THE LIGHT WE CANNOT SEE
A NOVEL
ANTHONY DOERR
5


THE BONE CLOCKS
A NOVEL
DAVID MITCHELL
6

EVERYTHING I NEVER TOLD YOU
CELESTE NG
7


We Are Not Ourselves
a novel
Matthew Thomas
8


NATIONAL BESTSELLER
Euphoria
LILY KING
9

10

FALLON'S PICKS

I Am Pilgrim

BY TERRY HAYES

"Dude, freak out. That's my new *Gone Girl*. *Gone Girl* was the last book that I couldn't put down. Seriously, email me when you read it. You'll be five chapters in, and you'll look up and be like, 'Dude!'"

BREAKOUT

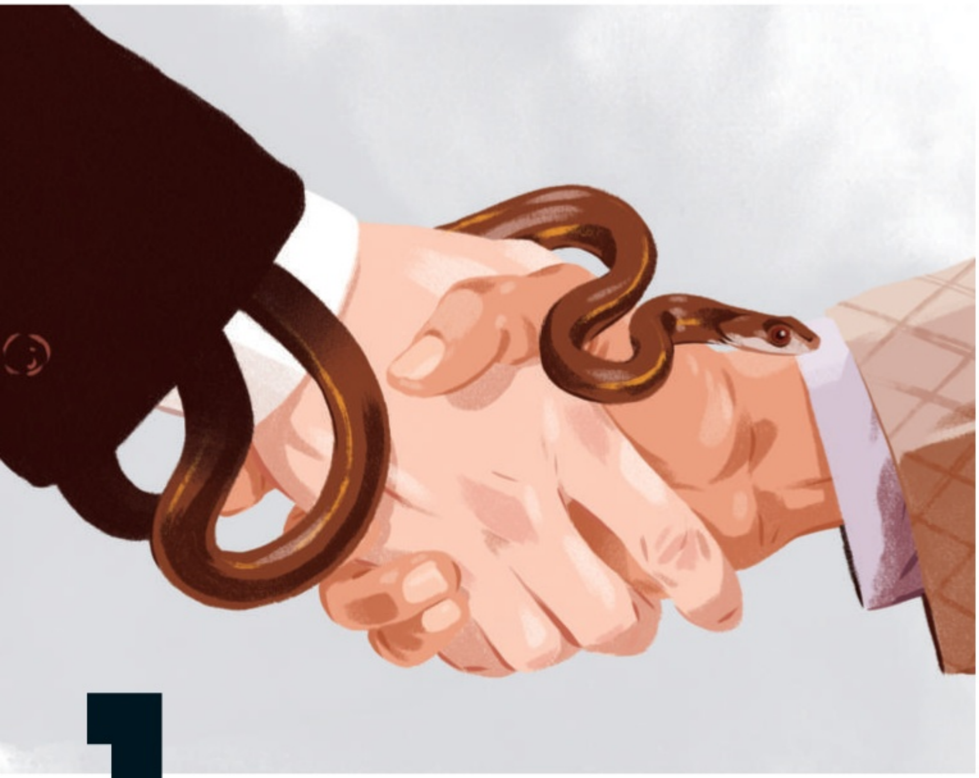
ANTHONY DOERR

••• For anyone who's read Doerr's *All the Light We Cannot See*—an epic that interweaves the stories of two children during WWII—it's easy to understand why it took a decade to write. "It's a lot of imaginative work to picture 1938," says the Boise, Idaho-based author, 41. "I wouldn't know if there was a school for disabled children in Paris...or what boys entering the Hitler Youth would look like. You fall into these whirlpools of research." Doerr's efforts have paid off. Since its publication in May, *All the Light* has been short-listed for a National Book Award and optioned for film by Twentieth Century Fox. It also reached a new audience for Doerr. "I never thought of it as a book that teenagers would be interested in, but parents and kids come up to me and both have read the book. I'm not used to that! It's touching." —STEPHAN LEE

DOERR: SHAUNA DOERR; FALLON: PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER

▶ *BEST FIRST LINE* • "This is the story of a murder, of a single soft-nosed bullet that traveled

BEST NONFICTION



1

BLOOD WILL OUT

WALTER KIRN

NO ONE LIKES TO BE MADE TO LOOK FOOLISH by a liar, especially in public. So it's possible *Up in the Air* novelist Kirn thought twice before writing this nonfiction book about how his supposed friend Clark Rockefeller—a member of the famously well-heeled family, or so Kirn believed—turned out to be a German con man and murderer named Christian Karl Gerhartsreiter. *Blood Will Out* engrossingly mixes Kirn's detailing of this real-life Tom Ripley with his own "How could I not have known?" self-laceration. Long before the end, you'll realize the author would have been a fool not to have written it. —CLARK COLLIS

↑ *ILLUSTRATION BY* **MATTHEW WOODSON**

2 / ON IMMUNITY

EULA BISS

Could a book entice the most vehement anti-vaccine crusaders to finally stick a needle in their kids' arms? This one might. Argued with both exhaustive research and profound creativity, it won't just make you reconsider your assumptions about science and progress and what's "natural." It will make you totally rethink your moral responsibility to every other human on earth. —MELISSA MAERZ

3 / THE SECRET HISTORY OF WONDER WOMAN

JILL LEPORE

If William Moulton Marston hadn't created Wonder Woman, she might've had to battle this strange, brilliant mastermind. A Harvard student who invented the lie-detector test, he was also a liar and manipulator, with a secret life as a polyamorist and bondage enthusiast. It's a fascinating story, told with all the pulpy drama of the best comic books. —MELISSA MAERZ

4 / THIRTEEN DAYS IN SEPTEMBER

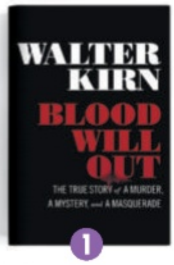
LAWRENCE WRIGHT

Wright's chronicle of the historic 1978 Camp David peace accords between Israel and Egypt isn't mere history. It's the present and the future, and Wright masterfully captures not only the moment but the personalities—Menachem Begin, Anwar Sadat, Jimmy Carter—that set the course for every Middle East headline of the past 36 years. —JEFF LABRECQUE

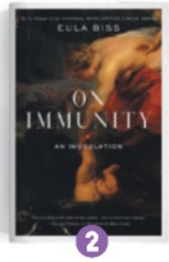
5 / CAN'T WE TALK ABOUT SOMETHING MORE PLEASANT?

ROZ CHAST

Falling down. Leaving the stove on. Finding a nursing home. You upward through a man's rib cage, piercing his lung and lodging in his neck..." —WILLIAM J. MANN, *TINSELTOWN*


WALTER KIRN
BLOOD WILL OUT
THE TRUE STORY of A MURDER, A MYSTERY, and A MASQUERADE

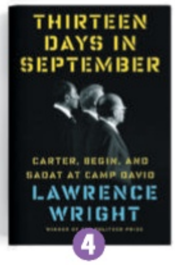
1


EULA BISS
ON IMMUNITY
AN INOCULATION

2

THE SECRET HISTORY OF WONDER WOMAN
JILL LEPORE

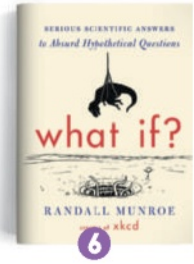
3


THIRTEEN DAYS IN SEPTEMBER
CARTER, BEGIN, AND SADAT AT CAMP DAVID
LAWRENCE WRIGHT

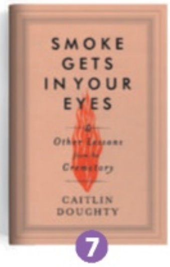
4

Can't we talk about something more PLEASANT?
ROZ CHAST
A MEMOIR

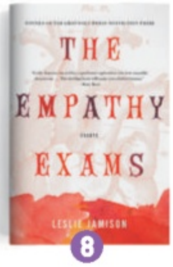
5


SERIOUS SCIENTIFIC ANSWERS to Absurd Hypothetical Questions
what if?
RANDALL MUNROE
xkcd

6


SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES
Other Lessons from the Crematory
CAITLIN DOUGHTY

7


THE EMPATHY EXAMS
LESLIE JAMISON

8

THE SHORT AND TRAGIC LIFE OF ROBERT PEACE
JEFF HOBBS

9

THE UNSPEAKABLE
MEGHAN DAUM

10

wouldn't expect a book about dealing with elderly parents to be hysterically funny, but this one—from *New Yorker* cartoonist Chast—certainly is. Chast has long mined her own life for comic gold, portraying herself as slightly neurotic and stressed-out; in this graphic memoir, which was nominated for a National Book Award, she looks for levity while coping with the sadness (and all the paperwork) that accompanies her parents' last years. —TINA JORDAN

6 / WHAT IF?

RANDALL MUNROE

To reinvigorate your sense of cosmic wonder, you can either sit through three problematic hours of *Interstellar* or breeze through former NASA scientist Munroe's lively answers—peppered with line drawings—to some pretty bizarre questions about life, the universe, and everything else. (Example: From what height would you need to drop a steak for it to be cooked when it hit the ground?) Extreme astrophysics and indecipherable chemistry have rarely been this clearly explained or this consistently hilarious. —KYLE ANDERSON

7 / SMOKE GETS IN YOUR EYES

CAITLIN DOUGHTY

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust—but who has to clean it all up? In her memoir, Doughty, a licensed mortician, takes us through her early days working in a line of business most of us would rather not think about, depicting the daily oddities and profundities of dealing with death. From the opening line—"A girl always remembers the first corpse she shaves"—it's the very definition of morbidly funny. —KEITH STASKIEWICZ

8 / THE EMPATHY EXAMS

LESLIE JAMISON

Jamison applies scalpel-sharp insight and wit to fundamental questions: Is my pain real? How do I feel the pain of others? Her search for answers takes her to extreme marathoners in Tennessee, poverty tours in the Third World, and a support group for sufferers of a disease most doctors believe is rooted in delusion. Reading a book about pain sounds...well...painful, but Jamison turns pain into art. —STEPHAN LEE

9 / THE SHORT AND TRAGIC LIFE OF ROBERT PEACE

JEFF HOBBS

Peace represented the American dream—a ghetto kid who went to Yale—before becoming a tired statistic, dying in a drug shoot-out. But Hobbs, his college roommate, digs deep into the tragic life of his friend, who wore many masks on his way up and down the path to happiness and success. —JEFF LABRECQUE

10 / THE UNSPEAKABLE

MEGHAN DAUM

There are some emotions that are hard enough to feel, let alone talk about—unless you're Daum, that is. This collection of essays embraces the stuff that makes most of us flinch: her conflicted feelings regarding her mother's death, her Gen-X nostalgia, her ambivalence about having children. Yet the book is anything but heavy; Daum's natural wit and razor-edged insights make even the squirmiest subjects pleasurable to read about. —SARA VILKOMERSON

A SPY AMONG FRIENDS
BEN MACINTYRE

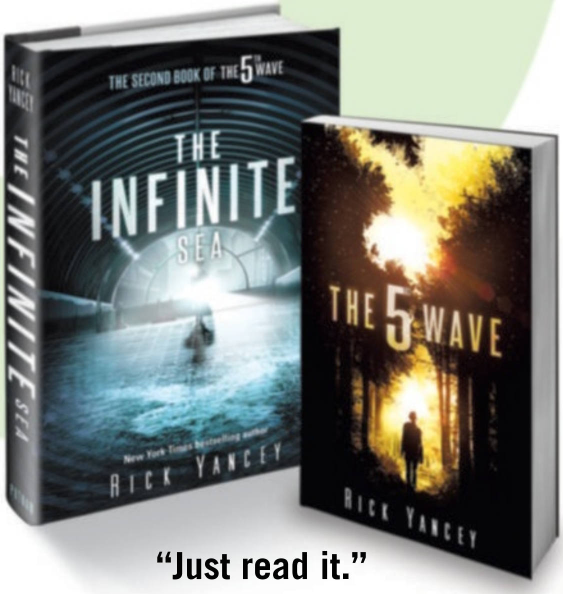
BEST SPY BOOK (TIE)
Espionage buffs had two great books to enjoy this year: Kai Bird's *The Good Spy*—a bio of CIA operative Robert Ames—and Ben Macintyre's Kim Philby exposé, *A Spy Among Friends.*

MOST ANXIOUSLY AWAITED SEQUEL
Fans went crazy for *Written in My Own Heart's Blood*, the eighth installment in Diana Gabaldon's *Outlander* series.

MOST NOVEL PREMISE FOR A THRILLER
In Natalie Young's *Season to Taste*, a British housewife kills her irritating husband—and then proceeds to butcher and eat him. Filet of leg, anyone?

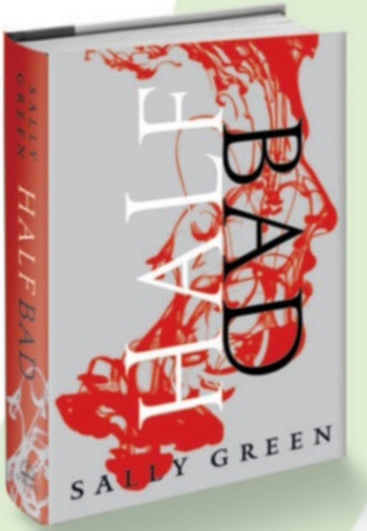
YOUR HOLIDAY HIT LIST

FOR YOUR FIERCEST SURVIVOR


THE SECOND BOOK OF THE 5TH WAVE
THE INFINITE SEA
New York Times bestselling author
RICK YANCEY
THE 5TH WAVE
RICK YANCEY

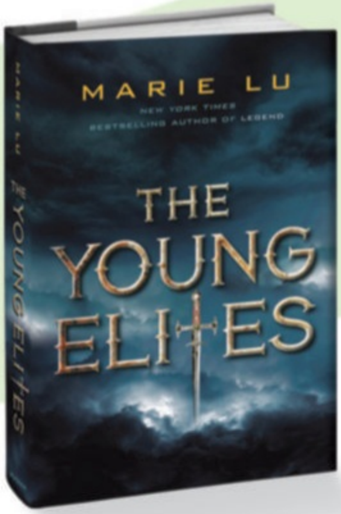
"Just read it."
—*Entertainment Weekly*

FOR THE GROWN-UP HARRY POTTER FAN


HALF BAD
SALLY GREEN

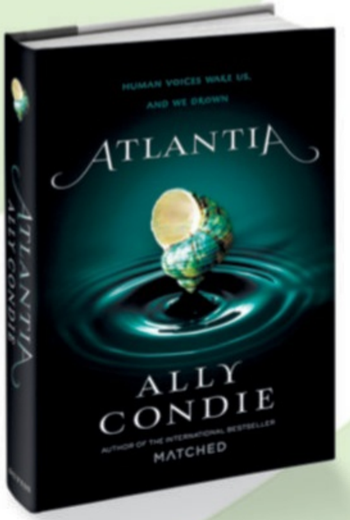
"Highly entertaining and dangerously addictive." —*Time*

FOR THOSE TEMPTED BY THE DARK SIDE


MARIE LU
NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF LEGEND
THE YOUNG ELITES

"[Lu] raises the stakes in the best way possible."
—*The New York Times Book Review*

FOR THE DREAMER WHO LONGS TO ESCAPE


HUMAN VOICES WAKE US, AND WE DROWN
ATLANTIA
ALLY CONDIE
AUTHOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER MATCHED

"Fresh, wild, and engrossing."
—Shannon Hale, award-winning, bestselling author of *Austenland* and *Dangerous*

NEED A BOOK RECOMMENDATION? VISIT PENGUINHOTLINE.COM

#GiveaBook

"I've gotta beat Emma Stone at lip-synching. That's my 2015 goal."

PHOTOGRAPH BY ART STREIBER

2014

The Bullseye

HERE'S A LOOK AT THE POP CULTURE NEWS THAT WAS RIGHT ON TARGET THIS YEAR—AND THE EVENTS THAT MISSED THE MARK

Basically sums up Sochi

I AM NOT FAMOUS ANYMORE
The four worst-men of the apocalypse

Elevator surveillance... the new Barbara Walters?

The little hitman that could

The Groot-iest time you had at the movies

Amazon vs. Hachette: literally making it difficult to read since 2014

Yeah, we get it, you like snow.

Two guys we hope are never bachelors again

Remnant with a cause

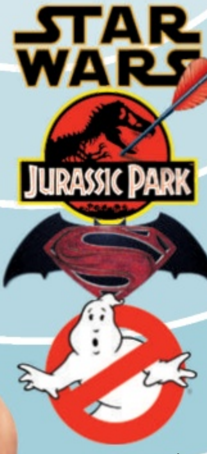
If you're in this photo, you *probably* had a pretty good year.

WHO WORE IT BETTER?

How to Get Away With Absolutely Anything on Network TV

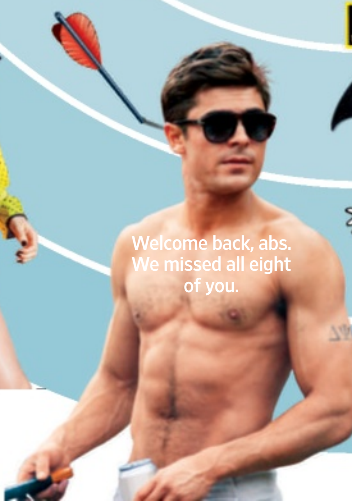
Eye-popping TV!

They say you never forget your first bang (bang).



You get a sequel! You get a sequel! Everybody gets a sequeeelll!

Are we entirely sure Taylor's not *She's All That*-ing Lorde?


Welcome back, abs. We missed all eight of you.

Remember that week you cared about *The Simpsons* again?

Tune in to Entertainment Weekly Radio's ***Bullseye*** show on SiriusXM Channel 105, airing Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

SHIA LABEOUF: ANITA BUGGE/WIREIMAGE.COM; JAMES FRANCO: MIGUEL AGUILAR/PACIFICCOASTNEWS; JUSTIN BIEBER: REUTERS; KANYE WEST: DOMINIQUE CHARRIAU/GETTY IMAGES; KINDLE: ISTOCKPHOTO; GEORGE CLOONEY: CHINAFOTOPRESS/GETTY IMAGES; JUAN PABLO GALAVIS: CRAIG SJODIN/ABC; *GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY*, *FROZEN*: DISNEY (2); WINDSOR FAMILY: DANNY MARTINDALE/WIREIMAGE.COM; CARTER FAMILY: JASON LAVERIS/FILMMAGIC.COM; LORDE AND SWIFT: LARRY BUSACCA/GETTY IMAGES FOR NARAS; *THE SIMPSONS*: FOX; *NEIGHBORS*: GLEN WILSON; ARIANA GRANDE: C FLANIGAN/GETTY IMAGES; NICKI MINAJ: GILBERT CARRASQUILLO/GETTY IMAGES; JESSIE J: IAN HORROCKS/GETTY IMAGES; *THE LEFTOVERS*: PAUL SCHIRALDI/HBO; OSCAR SELFIE: TWITTER; *JOHN WICK*: DAVID LEE; CAMERA: TOMASZ KACZMARCZYK/GETTY IMAGES; BOB COSTAS: NBC

NEW
JUICY FRUIT
FRUITY CHEWS
NEW GUM!
WRIGLEY'S
Juicy Fruit
FRUITY CHEWS
STRAWBERRY
NEW GUM!
WRIGLEY'S
Juicy Fruit
FRUITY CHEWS
ORIGINAL
NEW GUM EXPERIENCE
SAME GREAT BOTTLE*
BIG, SOFT PIECES
BURSTING WITH FRUITY FLAVOR

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*Same bottle that Juicy Fruit Pellets come in.

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ChapStick

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THINNEST SKIN.

They need specific care day and night.
New ChapStick® dual-ended hydration lock

24 HOUR CARE

night
ChapStick®
hydration lock
SKIN PROTECTANT
SUNSCREEN
day
SPF 12

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